

PREACHING CHRIST ON CAMPUS:
A PREACHERS' WORKSHOP FOR NEW COLLEGE MINISTERS

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY
TIMOTHY J. LEARY
JANUARY 2012

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To my boy Zeke:
Who bites me lots
and does many other great things.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to gratefully acknowledge these people who have helped me do this thesis:

Sarah, my wife, my first editor, ministry partner and parent to my child. Thank you for spurring me on during the dry times in the writing and loving God with your heart and life.

Bill Nelson, my mentor and second editor, thank you for inviting me into ministry and encouraging me the 14 years since then. I thank you for encouraging me to get training to do this for a lifetime and for being a friend along the way.

Kathy Tuan-MacLean, my boss and 3rd editor. Thank you for giving me the sabbatical (helping me with that application) and finally helping me write this thing in a way people can read it. Thank you for encouraging me along the way.

Pastor Craig Garriot- who along with his staff, shared the scriptures and encouraged me to grow in grace along the way. You have modeled sharing your heart when you preach, which has helped me personally and with learning how to preach. Thank you.

Pastor Gordon Hugenberger- thank you for your love for God and your love for His Word that you have dedicated your life to learning and teaching the amazingness of God.

Rev. Bruce Cooke, thank you for bringing your preaching knowledge and enthusiasm and helping lead the preaching workshop. Your years of dedicated service to the campus is impressive. It was fun planning and working with you and being friends all these years.

Haddon Robinson- thank you for dedicating your life to God and to training up the next generations of preachers. I appreciate that you told me to do this degree when I met with you years ago, and even though I went to China instead, you kept teaching, and I got to learn from you still. If I ever have a ministry of preaching weekly, I am sure those who have to listen, will be grateful that you kept teaching so I could improve under you. Thank you so much for advising me in this.

Jesus, I thank you for saving me and leading me. “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.” (1 John 3:16) Thank you.

ABSTRACT

Ministers for the three largest nondenominational college ministries (IV, Campus Crusade for Christ and The Navigators) are usually recent college graduates who lack seminary and preaching training and yet are often asked to preach at student gatherings. The students listening are the future leaders of America and other countries of the world. This thesis project develops a “preaching workshop” for the new college ministers to give them confidence and skills to preach Biblically on campus. Chapters two and three are the literature review and the Biblical and theological background for the basis for preaching Biblically to the University. Chapter four is a summary of the preaching workshop for new college ministers. Chapter five is the review of the workshop and suggestions for future improvements. The hope of this thesis is to train new college ministers to preach Christ on campus, so that the next generation of leaders will follow Christ and rely on the Bible as their map for life.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM TO BE ADDRESSED

Introduction: The University

The first college in America, Harvard College, was started in 1636 to train puritan ministers to preach Christ to the new world. The task of preaching the gospel was its central mission. Harvard continued to produce minister after minister to preach the Gospel. “The earliest record of a voluntary student religious society in North America dates back to January 10, 1723, at Harvard.¹ Yet, in the nearly 400 years since Harvard started, the college has lost this Gospel focus.² However, there is still a great need to train Biblical ministers to preach the Gospel to the university and the world.

In America, there are over 20 million college students according to the US department of education.³ The colleges are training students to be workers in all kinds of fields. Over 700,000 of the college students and scholars are internationals.⁴ These international students will likely return to their country to be leaders of the future. Thus, the American university is influential both locally and on a worldwide scale. Charles Malik, the former President of the United Nations said, "The University is arguably the single most significant institution in the Western Civilization... change the university and

¹ Clarence P. Shedd, “*Two Centuries of Student Christian Movements*” (New York: Association Press, 1934), 6, as quoted in *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 32.

² Dictionary of Unitarian & Universalist Biography. “The Unitarian Controversy and Its Puritan Roots.” <http://www25.uua.org/uuhs/duub/articles/unitariancontroversy.html>. (accessed December 5, 2011).

³ Institute of Education Sciences. “Total fall enrollment in degree-granting institutions, by attendance status, sex of student, and control of institution: Selected years, 1947 through 2009.” http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables/dt10_197.asp (accessed July 8, 2011).

⁴ Institute of International Education. “Open Doors 2010 fast facts”. <http://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/~/media/Files/Corporate/Open-Doors/Fast-Facts/Fast%20Facts%202010.ashx> (accessed November 26, 2011).

you change the world.⁵ How can we change the University today? Very few of the universities today are run by evangelical Christians. Harvard converted to Unitarianism in the early 1800's and many other schools since have lost their biblical roots. There is a need for ministries to try to reach the secular campuses and share the Good News of Christ.

Since the early church, the Gospel has been shared both through personal outreach and through preaching.⁶ In the Bible accounts, the personal ministry is often to a hurting person and the preaching is to a large crowd. Since the Gospel is not commonly heard from the faculty or even through the Chapel at universities these days, there is a need for ministries to reach onto campus to share the Gospel both through personal friendships and through preaching. This is an effective way to influence the university for Christ.

College Ministries

In the 1940s and 1950s three national ministries were started to reach college students at secular universities: InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IV), Campus Crusade for Christ (just renamed Cru⁷) and The Navigators. With the return of the soldiers from World War II and the GI Bill, colleges and Christian ministries gained momentum. Today, all three ministries are thriving. IV has been operating for 70 years now and is over 35,000 students strong. Campus Crusade, as an umbrella organization for many

⁵ Davis, Glen. "Summer 2008 Rapport: Change the University, Change the World." http://www.agts.edu/rapport/2008summer/change_the_university.html (accessed November 26, 2011).

⁶ Personal witness ministry in Acts: 3:6 crippled beggar, 8:27 Ethiopian eunuch, 9:32 Aeneas and Dorcas Preaching in Acts, Peter: 2:14, 3:12, 4:8, 5:29, Stephen: 7:2, Paul: 13:16, 17:13, 17:22.

⁷ Campus Crusade Website. "CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST TO BECOME: Cru" <http://www.ccci.org/about-us/donor-relations/our-new-name/press.htm> (accessed July 22, 2011).

ministries, is one of the largest nonprofits in the US. Navigators has always been smaller but more focused on making dedicated disciples.

The most common type of staff worker from these organizations is a newly graduated university student who gives three to four years to the ministry that helped grow him or her in the Christian faith. They have been touched by Jesus through Bible studies, large group talks, camps, mission trips, one-on-one mentoring and fellowship on campus. They have led in many ways. They learned how to do ministry first as a student and the transition to campus staff is often relatively smooth. But often they lack training to preach a Biblical message in the University.

The Problem- the Lack of Preaching Training

Seminary training is encouraged in these college ministries but on a part-time basis. The college minister who could teach preaching, after receiving seminary training, often leave the college ministry for church ministry. Thus, there is not many who are trained in preaching who remain in college ministry.

Most college ministries have a “large group meeting” each week where college ministers or local pastors come in to preach the Bible so the students can learn about God and how to live for Him while in college. Most staff (college ministers) have never had significant training on how to preach Biblically. Staff are in position to best preach to the students as they understand the campus pressures best. But as they start to take seminary courses, usually they don’t take preaching classes until year four or five in part-time curriculum. The college ministers certainly have heard many sermons and messages. They know which ones had a strong and impactful Biblical message. But it is

one thing to hear a good sermon and another to know how to preach one well. The new college ministers often lack confidence when speaking in public in general and more so when trying to teach God's word.

The purpose of the thesis is to train college ministers to preach Christ on campus

This thesis will focus on the importance of preaching Biblically to the University. If we do not answer the "why should we" question there will never be the motivation to do the work needed to preach Biblically. The thesis project is to develop a preaching workshop to train college ministers to preach Christ on campus.

Chapter two will consider the Biblical and theological foundation of preaching to the University. We will look at some of the Bible passages on preaching and consider some of the challenges to preaching Christ to campus today. We will seek to find a good summary or picture of the Gospel that connects with students today.

Chapter three will be a literature review of related books on expository preaching to this generation and the University in particular. This thesis will consider how desperately the modern University needs the Gospel. The aim is to create understanding on why it is important to preach the gospel and how we can preach well to university students, so they can hear and follow Christ.

In this thesis we desire to take the university culture seriously as we seek to preach the Gospel to it. Preaching through narratives and in a story telling manner is an important style of preaching for this generation and this thesis will focus on how to help students hear the Gospel. We need to teach the basic Gospel in a relevant way so that students can understand and know how to live it out in their lives and world. We will

look at some books about the Gospel for young Christians and consider the main points theologically that need to be taught.

The fourth chapter is the plan for the preaching workshop. It includes lesson plans and handouts. The preaching workshop was three, three hour sessions. We gave pre-course work and we had discussion of material in the training. Also, part of the workshop was practice preaching (though full sermons were not given). The goal was to help the minister progress in confidence and skill in preaching one talk for the fall semester. After the sessions, the ministers gave some feedback so we could improve the training in the future.

Chapter five is a review of the teaching sessions. We asked for reviews of the workshop and the staff gave both quantitative and qualitative feedback. They shared what went well and what should be improved for the future? Their feedback was helpful in preparing to improve this preaching workshop for the future.

The desired goal for this thesis is to empower and equip the new college ministers stepping onto campuses with a Biblical foundation in preaching to this generation of college students. Hopefully this will benefit not only those who hear but also the young ministers as well. Our desire is for this training curriculum or adapted ones based on it, to benefit the college ministries in the US and at some point even the college ministries abroad. To God be the Glory.

CHAPTER 2

A THEOLOGY FOR PREACHING CHRIST ON CAMPUS

Many books have been written about how to preach Christ; but not much, however, has been written about how to preach Christ on campus. This chapter presents a Biblical theology of preaching Christ on campus. This involves focusing on Christ and presenting him, whether from the New Testament or Old, in ways that students today can come to understand that he is the true answer of their problems. This chapter will look at passages from the Bible and consider authors who preached Christ in the past and the present.

Preaching Christ on campus requires us to take the location and the culture of the campus seriously. The current University setting is in some ways a microcosm of cultures. In one sense, everyone lives in close proximity much like villages of old, but in another sense, because people come from various backgrounds, there is no shared culture on which the campus builds norms and values.

Is it a good idea to focus on the campus? By being campus focused, are we watering down the Gospel or placing too high a priority on “man” or culture? Is there Biblical precedent in preaching to vary, not the story of the Gospel, but the style or the way the gospel is preached?

Biblically Reaching Varying Cultures

Jesus, the writers of the gospels, and the apostle Paul, all cared greatly about their audience. Every gospel writer wrote to a different mix of readers. In compiling their

accounts, they took into consideration their readers' specific needs and concerns. Mark wrote probably from Rome and to the greater church with a focus on the Gentile believers.¹ Therefore, Mark begins the Gospel: "The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Mark connects his Gospel account to the Old Testament through the prophets of Isaiah and Malachi. However, he does not require his readers to know much of the Old Testament to understand the message in Mark. Matthew, however, wrote in large part to a Jewish audience and he emphasized that Jesus is the Messiah.² Matthew takes into account his Jewish audience, starting his Gospel with: "An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham." So, Mark links Jesus to the prophets, Matthew links Jesus via the great king David all the way back to the patriarch Abraham.³ Unlike Matthew, Luke targeted Gentiles. In Luke 3:38, he traced Jesus' roots back even farther in Jesus' genealogy to Adam, Son of God, emphasizing the history of the world that all humans come from.⁴ Luke linked his Gospel to the Roman world as he writes that Jesus was born in the days of Emperor Augustus, when "Quirinius was governor of Syria" (2:1-2). Luke continues the story of the Gospel in Acts to show how the Gospel spreads beyond Israel to include the Gentiles. Luke is the only gentile writer in the Bible and he clearly shows how the Gospel is for all: the poor, outcast, alien and Gentile.

While Matthew, Mark and Luke share so much in common in their Gospel accounts, they also focus their message toward their intended audiences.

¹ *English Standard Version Study Bible*, (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 1890.

² *English Standard Version Study Bible*, (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 1816.

³ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 59.

⁴ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 60.

John traces the good news of Jesus even further than Mark (the prophets), Matthew (Abraham), and Luke (Adam). John goes all the way back to the beginning, even before creation: In the beginning was the Word . . . All things came into being through him . . . And the Word became flesh . . ." (1:1-14).⁵ John reaches out to the Jewish believers by referring back to Genesis by starting, "In the beginning."⁶ John also writes that Jesus is identified as the "I AM" of the Old Testament.⁷ John writes that Moses wrote about Jesus (5:46). John reaches out to the Greek (Gentile) readers as he wrote Jesus is the eternal "Logos" which is an idea from Greek philosophy.

As each of these Gospel writers wrote down the story of Jesus it seems they were quite concerned with who would read it and how to help them understand Jesus. Luke, since he was writing to the Gentiles, did not focus on the Old Testament as Matthew did, writing to the Jews. Is this a pattern in the New Testament or just among Gospel writers?

Jesus also varied his teaching style based on his audience. Notice how Jesus, in Mark 4, spoke to the large crowd using a parable and then how he spoke directly to the small group of disciples and explained the parable. Jesus was teaching a huge crowd on a lake and got into a boat. He spoke about how a farmer scattered seed among four different types of soils. Three soils were unprofitable but one was very profitable. The last thing Jesus said to the crowd was, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." The crowd then dispersed. When Jesus was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables (v. 10). He told them, "The secret of the Kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables." He

⁵ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 61.

⁶ *English Standard Version Study Bible*, (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 2019.

⁷ *English Standard Version Study Bible*, (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 2035.

then quoted Isaiah saying that they will never understand and be forgiven. Obviously, Jesus was addressing serious matters. Jesus continued teaching the Twelve the parable. Why did the crowd get the confusing parable and only the Twelve received the subsequent clear teaching? Parables were used to reveal as well as conceal truth.⁸ Jesus used the parable to evaluate the true interest of those who were there. Those who remained (the Twelve and others) had the secret of the Kingdom of God (v. 11); They had Jesus with them. They did not understand the parable but they remained and could ask Jesus about it. The crowd left and they only received the concealed truth. Jesus spoke differently to audiences based on how they related and responded to him. To the large crowd that was not really interested, all they heard was a confusing parable. To those who wanted to know more and asked Jesus, they had Jesus, the secret of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus also spoke differently to his disciples and the Pharisees. He got angry with his disciples, just as he got angry with Pharisees, but not in the same way. He was frustrated with his disciples at their slow learning,⁹ but the Pharisees he called “white washed tombs.”¹⁰ He also treated the crowd differently than the Pharisees and religious leaders. He had compassion on the crowds¹¹ (but not the Pharisees). Jesus did choose his words differently depending on with whom he spoke.

⁸ Isaiah 6:9-10.

⁹ Mark 8:17 Jesus says to his disciples, “Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened?” Matthew 17:17, (after the disciples could not heal a child with seizures) “O unbelieving and perverse generation.” Jesus replied, “How long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you?”

¹⁰ Mathew 23:27, Jesus says, “Woe to you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like white washed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean.”

¹¹ Mark 6:34 “Jesus . . .saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd”.

How about those who came after him, such as the Apostles? Did the audience influence how they shared the Gospel?

Paul also changed his communication style depending upon his audience. Paul was a Pharisee. He was not soft. But he also knew the degree of intervention that God used to win him to Christ, and so he was willing to become all things to all people that he might reach some (1 Cor. 9:12). In Athens (Acts 17), he quoted Greek poets and even related the Gospel to their religion (their altar to an unknown God). Many devout Jews would have thought it highly questionable to speak this way to a pagan culture.

College Culture Today

What does this mean for college preaching today? To preach Christ on campus we need to think through audiences seriously. If we are preaching to a group of believing engineers at MIT, it should sound different than to group of international seekers at Boston University. Or if we are speaking to a business group or a law group, or a group of athletes, the Gospel illustrations and delivery should be contextualized in a way that helps to bring them to God. If we merely package the Gospel into a four point presentation, without considering culture, we are not preaching in a Biblical way.

Since post-modernism and multiculturalism is more influential today,¹² the college campus community may be less interested in Four Spiritual “Laws” as a Gospel presentation. Instead, this generation is more interested in “community” and relationship with God. Does this mean that we change the Gospel to meet today’s culture? Absolutely not. This generation does not need new theology. There is a reason why the

¹² Post modernism can be summarized as believing that there are many valid views and that objective truth does not exist. Multiculturalism is the appreciation of many cultures.

liberal church is in such a steep decline.¹³ They have no good news to offer. They don't see God as holy, Jesus as THE savior, and we the people as totally needy. The Gospel message that we are totally needy and dead in our sins and that Jesus is the complete answer to our problem is the way forward. Still, the way we teach the Gospel must be adapted for varying audiences. Especially as we try to reach this generation of students in college.

How We Present the Gospel

Evangelical theology traditionally emphasizes a legal presentation of the Gospel. God is a judge and we justly deserve a death sentence under the law for the sin we have done. God sends Jesus to die in our place. This is true and accurate as Romans and Galatians often talk about Jesus as our substitute. In order to develop skills at presenting the Gospel, evangelicals have focused on this law presentation. Unfortunately, this legal presentation appeals to those from a modern worldview, not a postmodern worldview.

A legal presentation is not the only way we can picture the Gospel. The Bible presents the Gospel in many ways and we are wise to learn how to preach some of these different pictures for college audiences today, both for Christians and non-Christians. Many Christian students have only heard the Gospel as a law presentation and another presentation or picture might connect better with them. The post modern non-Christian, and the internationals might also better understand the Gospel through other pictures. For instance, to an Asian with a more traditional high view of parents in general and their

¹³ Goldberg, Joshua. "Decline in US mainline denominations continues."

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/decline.in.us.mainline.denominations.continues/25305.htm> (accessed July 21, 2011).

father in particular, sharing the Gospel that enables us to become a child of God (John 1:12) is powerful. To have God as our Father is particularly meaningful to Asians.

Picturing the Gospel

Neil Livingstone, in *Picturing the Gospel*, gives us ten pictures of the Gospel, many that could be appealing to students on campus. Livingstone has been a campus minister for over 20 years with IV and most of his stories are of students struggling to understand God. Livingstone writes about how God used different pictures of the Gospel to speak to him.

But the law court image is both wonderful and flat. . . But other images in the gallery reassured me, once I realized they were gospel too. I realized that he not only justified me in a legal sense but also put in a new kind of life in me. He not only let me off the hook from his judgment but also set me free from the power of sin. Once an enemy, I was reconciled and brought near. I had not been left on my own to try to become good. The unmerited grace of God started me on the journey, and that “grace will lead me home.” The rest of the gallery told me the rest of the story- and set my heart at ease.¹⁴

Livingstone doesn’t discount the law court summary of the Gospel as some “emergent” speakers seem to. He actually came to Christ through the classic law court gospel presentation. Yet, he wants Christians and especially those on campus to know other biblical ways to share the Gospel to connect the Gospel with this generation. For this thesis, we will look at three of his pictures of the Gospel: Life, Adoption and Kingdom.

¹⁴ Neil Livingstone, *Picturing the Gospel*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2007), 21.

Life

Jesus promises us eternal life. The fact that Jesus can satisfy is good news to students today. Many students, growing-up in broken homes or living a self-centered lifestyle, feel hopeless. They lack life and the desire for life. College is filled with pressure to succeed and it is supposed to be “the time of your life” and yet it can often be a lonely time for students. Depression is not uncommon on campus.

Jesus offers life to these students. When students hear eternal life, they often think of life after death. This is part of the picture, but the Bible talks about eternal life beginning now. Young students don’t value or desire life beyond the grave, but eternal life that begins now is much more interesting to them. When Jesus talked to the Samaritan woman who was running out of life and water, he told the woman, “Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:14). The water and the life that Jesus offered the woman made a difference to her life that day, and it overflowed to eternal life. Like students, she wanted the water immediately. Most students think of Christianity as rules and not life (law and not gospel), but we must preach Christ in a way that shows that He is offering true life and not death.

Adoption

Many students have bad experiences with their fathers. Some have had their fathers leave them, commit adultery, or even physically abuse them. Therefore, presenting God as an adopting father can be a real challenge. It can be difficult for students to picture God as their father because they attribute their earthly father’s faults to

God. Therefore, preaching about the unconditional adoption God offers is good news to college students today. Paul builds on this theme as he writes, “In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will” (Ephesians 1:5). While many college students in America reject the Christianity they hear which is all about rules, we need to preach the Gospel as being adopted by a loving father God.

Jesus says “Yet to all who receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12). As we preach on college campuses, we need to preach God as the ideal father. We all have glimpses and hopes for what an ideal father is. Preaching about God as the ideal father helps the international students connect to the Gospel since they already are influenced by a culture that places high respect on males and elders.

Jesus’ definition of father is found in Luke 15. We must allow him to define his own father. Luke 15, demonstrates a kind of father that goes above and beyond what even an international student would imagine an ideal father to be. One son asks for his inheritance early, basically disowning his father and putting him under great financial stress. Still, the father generously gives it to him. Then the son wastes the money in wild living. Yet, when he returns, the father shows his extravagant love to him. The son gave up his natural born rights when he asked for his inheritance. But the forgiving father shows his love and acceptance of his son by giving to his returned son his best coat, ring

and sandals.¹⁵ The father has adopted his son back. This is the love of a father that we all long for. This Gospel will sound like and be good news to many lost college students.

Kingdom

While “life” and “adoption” pictures of the gospel are great, they’re limited to focusing about the individual. Since the 60’s students have searched for an ideal world but are always disappointed with the world they find. Students living in a post September 11th world know that the world is messed-up. They know that their own lives are messed-up. They need God and His Kingdom that Jesus is bringing to earth. They do not want Jesus to give them a huge list of rules; they want to “change the world.”

The Kingdom of God is the answer to how God is changing the world. Even better, students today can be part of His plan! Jesus’ initial call to his disciples was, “The Kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe in the good news!” (Mark 1:15). The Kingdom of God changes the world. Jesus comes to right the wrongs. Jesus shows that the Kingdom of God comes with him through healing, compassion for the poor, and casting out demons. When John the Baptist was in prison and wasn’t sure if Jesus was the savior, what did Jesus send as a message to John? He didn’t just say more people are praying now. Jesus said, “The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.” (Mathew 11:5) This big picture of the Kingdom of God encouraged an imprisoned John the Baptist and it appears to inspire college students today.

¹⁵ Neil Livingstone, *Picturing the Gospel*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2007), 52.

What is the Kingdom of God really like? What is a picture of that today? As the US finally toppled Iraq's oppressive government and rolled into Bagdad, we could see cheering on the streets. People were so glad to see the liberating soldiers because the US represented freedom, no more oppressive rulers. Sadly, the US didn't bring complete freedom as we have seen the terrorist and oppression continue. Jesus, however, brings the Kingdom of God and true freedom. Not freedom to sin, but freedom from sin, death and hell. It will be a great day indeed when Jesus comes back! Still, He is advancing and the Kingdom of God is at hand! This is something college students can hear and respond to. This is something they can join. It is a movement of God.

John Piper's *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*

John Piper wrote an amazing book called *The Supremacy of God in Preaching* that is relevant to students. In his book, Piper stressed the importance of God-focused preaching and the centrality of His Word. Piper also understands the incredible impact that preaching can bring to students. He writes about how God called him to be a preacher while lying in bed at the infirmary at Wheaton College listening to Harold John Ockenga preaching at the chapel. Piper changed his major after hearing the talks and has never doubted the call of God for him to be a preacher since.

Piper quotes Cotton Mather from 300 years ago, "The great design and intention of the office of a Christian preacher [is] to restore the throne and dominion of God in the souls of men."¹⁶ He contends that the modern preaching emphasis on psychology in preaching and being "relevant," misses the God-centered task of declaring the greatness

¹⁶ John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 25.

of God and focuses too much on how to care for man's needs. "Jesus is Lord" is what needs to be declared in preaching whether on campus or in church. This may not be something that every college student wants to hear. Most college students have been hearing, "you can do anything you want" their whole life. The fact that Jesus is Lord of the world and should be Lord of our lives and future is not the American dream of college students. Still, it is what is best for them and for the world and it is what we must preach.

Piper's theology in all his books can be summarized by, "God is most glorified in those who are most satisfied in him."¹⁷ This is a way of saying that God is most glad when we see Jesus as our Lord and leader of our life and follow Him. That fact that Jesus is Lord would be quite scary if we didn't know Jesus. But as we get to know Him in the scriptures we can see that He is a servant leader who has died for those who follow Him. By following Jesus who died for us, we are saved. The cross of Christ is the foundation of our preaching and it provides us the good news we can tell students.

Piper goes on to talk about the Spirit and that for preaching to be used by God it needs to be empowered by the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God speaks through the Word of God. "Where the Bible is esteemed as the inspired and inerrant Word of God, preaching can flourish. But where the Bible is treated as a record of valuable religious insight, preaching dies."¹⁸ In my ministry context in Boston, there are numerous distractions that present obstacles for people hearing the word of God, even at church

¹⁷ John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 33.

¹⁸ John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 44.

services. Thus, the preaching we do at these student meetings becomes all the more important:

One of the biggest problems I have with younger preachers whom I am called on to critique is to get them to quote the parts of the text that support the points they are making. It makes me wonder if they have been taught that you should get the drift of a text and then talk in your own words for thirty minutes. The effect of that kind of preaching is to leave people groping for the Word of God and wondering whether what you said is really in the Bible.¹⁹

As we preach to college students, Piper encourages us to show them that we are preaching from the Bible not from our own understanding. We are to preach the word of God, not our own opinions. We can expound and illustrate but the teaching comes from the Bible. It is our course guide and we should follow it and teach it with passion.

Piper has a high view of God's sovereignty in salvation and yet he makes a good point about the problem of being hyper-Calvinistic (thinking there is no human responsibility). He says,

There is a mechanical view of eternal security that drains the blood-earnestness right out of the weekly ministry of preaching to the saints. . . Heaven and hell are at stake every Sunday morning, not merely because unbelievers might be present, but because our people are saved “if indeed [they] continue in the faith” (Col. 1:23) and faith comes – and stays – by the hearing of the Word of God in the Gospel (Rom 10:17).²⁰

As campus preachers, we don't want Christian students to be worried all the time about eternal security, but Piper reminds us of the danger in having no fear towards God at all.

¹⁹ John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 45.

²⁰ John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 62 .

If the students think they are saved and now don't have to worry about God, then other things will take priority. Often, well-meaning students get too busy for God, and if this continues it may mean Jesus is not Lord of their lives. A danger of preaching on campus to people you think are totally secure in Christ is that it can seem unnecessary. But if we see each student on campus as on a path to God and desperately needing encouragement to keep following Christ on these secular campuses, it keeps our task focused and clear. We are there to help unbelievers and believers follow Jesus to be saved. This task is worthy of our greatest effort and our preaching has purpose.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon's *Lectures to My Students*

Although considering Charles Spurgeon's work from 150 years ago may seem irrelevant to today's college student, Spurgeon's writings are important because his focus on preaching Christ and his ability to train others. Spurgeon was the most famous preacher in London for 37 years and preached to 15,000 people regularly.²¹ "Charles Spurgeon was anything but an intellectual elitist. There has scarcely been a pastor with more popular appeal."²² While he never went to college, he started and led The Pastor's College which is still the largest Baptist theological school in Europe today. His book summarizes the advice he gave students, advice that's still important for today's 21st century student.

The first thing that Spurgeon desired was for his students to be sure that they were Christian and were growing both spiritually and in character.²³ Similarly, since this

²¹ Shepherd's Notes - *Spurgeon's Lectures to my Students* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 1998), 6.

²² John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 24.

²³ Shepherd's Notes - *Spurgeon's Lectures to my Students* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 1998), 11.

preaching workshop's goal is to help young campus ministers, we should encourage them to check for their own faith and growth in Christ. If we as campus ministers are so concerned with serving others that we are not careful to be growing in our relationship with Christ, we can miss our primary calling to know God and to follow Him. Spurgeon taught that unconverted preachers are: "unhappy, useless (they come across folks dying of thirst, and have no water to give), and mischievous (eventually the unsaved preacher is sure to reveal character flaws)".²⁴

The character of the preacher is also of great importance, even in little things such as small debts, unpunctuality, petty quarrels, and discourteousness.

Dwight L. Moody, the famous American evangelist who came to London to conduct a crusade, wanted to meet Spurgeon face-to-face. Moody went to Spurgeon's home in Norwood and knocked on the door. To his shock, Spurgeon answered the knock with a cigar in his hand – a vice he greatly enjoyed and received much comfort from when the pain of his gout became unbearable. Moody stammered, "How can a man of God like you, have something as vile as that?" as he pointed to the cigar. Spurgeon replied by pointing to Moody's more than ample belly and asked, "And how can a man of God like you possess something as sinful as that?"²⁵

This humorous account demonstrates that the character of a preacher can be a turnoff to others, even to another godly preacher. This is a challenge to this generation of college ministers, to realize that their life is the first "Bible" many college students get to read. If we live in a way that is not like Jesus, we can keep them from Him. If we live badly, it doesn't matter what we say; no one will listen. Not in this generation that has seen many hypocrites in the church and in public service.

²⁴ Shepherd's Notes - *Spurgeon's Lectures to my Students* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 1998),12.

²⁵ Shepherd's Notes - *Spurgeon's Lectures to my Students* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 1998),38.

Spurgeon went on to teach about the importance of soul winning. He said “Brethren, if the Lord gives you no zeal for souls, keep to the lapstone or the trowel, but avoid the pulpit.”²⁶ This is a great reminder that campus ministers should be concerned with preaching Christ to the lost on campus. We are there to be missionaries (we raise support to do this job) but we can lose focus and just run fellowships without an eye for the lost who don’t yet believe.

Spurgeon is famous for not only his oratorical skills, which must have been astounding as he preached weekly to thousands without microphone, but also for the content of his sermons. His sermons are still in print today and have been published, some have estimated, up to 100 million copies.²⁷ He encouraged his students to write their sermon out but not to read it or memorize it.²⁸ But what made his sermons special was his “earnestness.” He said this was “the most essential quality for successful ministry.”²⁹ Where did this come from? For Spurgeon, it came from God through prayer. “All our libraries and studies are mere emptiness compared with our closets. We grow, we wax mighty, we prevail in private prayer.”³⁰ Spurgeon taught his students that the way to preach well is to first be connected to God through prayer.

What about the content of Spurgeon’s sermons? Why do people want to read them even today, 150 years later? What does he teach his students to focus on in their preaching? “Preach Christ, always and evermore. He is the whole gospel . . . If with the zeal of the Methodists we can preach the doctrine of the Puritans, a great future is

²⁶ Shepherd’s Notes - *Spurgeon’s Lectures to my Students* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 1998),14.

²⁷ Shepherd’s Notes - *Spurgeon’s Lectures to my Students* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 1998),1.

²⁸ Shepherd’s Notes - *Spurgeon’s Lectures to my Students* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 1998),29.

²⁹ Shepherd’s Notes - *Spurgeon’s Lectures to my Students* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 1998),7.

³⁰ Shepherd’s Notes - *Spurgeon’s Lectures to my Students* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 1998),16.

before us.”³¹ This is a great quote to finish Spurgeon with. His focus was on Christ. This is the very focus we need as we preach on campus today. Still, in ministry he admired the zeal of the Methodists. All of the large campus ministries copy from the Methodists. Ministries operate through small group discipleship and desiring that people don’t fall away but stay connected to the “vine” through intentional relationships. Still, in theology, like Spurgeon suggested, we are wise to preach the doctrine of the Puritans. Not in a way that kills zeal but in a way that opens our eyes to the hugeness of God.

What does it mean to “Preach Christ?”

Most would agree it is important for college ministers to “preach Christ;” yet, there is confusion and disagreement over what it means to preach Christ. As Sidney Greidanus, wrote in *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*:

For some, preaching Christ means preaching “Christ crucified” in the sense of linking every text to Calvary and Christ’s atoning work on the cross. Others broaden the meaning to preaching “Christ’s death and resurrection.” Still others seek to link the text to the work of the eternal Logos, who is active in the Old Testament times especially as the Angel of Yahweh, the Commander of the Lord’s army, and the Wisdom of God. Others broaden the meaning even further to preaching sermons that center on God, for, it is argued, since Christ is the second person of the Trinity and fully God, a God-centered sermon is Christ-centered. Still others argue that “The Lord Jesus Christ is recognized as “Jehovah,” and therefore we can substitute the name of Christ wherever we see “Jehovah” in the Old Testament.³²

Looking at the variance of how people understand “preaching Christ” can be confusing and makes it difficult to know if we have preached Christ. Looking again at Greidanus can add some clarity to what the New Testament teaches about preaching Christ.

³¹ Shepherd’s Notes - Spurgeon’s Lectures to my Students (Nashville: Holman Reference, 1998),22.

³² Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 3.

The New Testament church preached the birth, ministry, death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus of Nazareth as the fulfillment of God's old covenant promises, his presence today in the Spirit, and his imminent return. In short, "preaching Christ" means preaching Christ incarnate in the context of the full sweep of redemptive history.³³

This is helpful as some seem to think that only preaching about Jesus' death is preaching Christ. We want to major on the majors, and the "Cross of Christ" is central, but still, if that is all we can preach, we are truly limited. In the four Gospel accounts, the last week of Jesus life on earth is almost half of the account; the other half spans over three years of ministry. Greidanus states that "to preach Christ is to proclaim some facet of the person, work or teaching of Jesus of Nazareth so that people may believe him, trust him. Love him and obey him."³⁴ The idea that we preach Christ with the goal that other people may believe him and trust him is so important. This shows that our goal is not just information but an active faith in Christ. That is why we preach Christ. Greidanus goes on to say that "Preaching Christ as preaching sermons which authentically integrate the message of the text with the climax of God's revelation in the person, work, and/or teaching of Jesus Christ as revealed in the new testament."³⁵ This definition shows how we have a dual task of preaching the text of the sermon (Old Testament or New Testament) and yet preaching the climax of God's revelation in Jesus. Doing both these well is a real challenge.

³³ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 4.

³⁴ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 8.

³⁵ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 10.

Reasons for Preaching Christ Today

What are the reasons for preaching Christ today? One is that Jesus told us to in the great commission. Also, salvation is only found in Jesus. As Greidanus writes,

A further stimulus for preaching Christ is that Christ is the only way of salvation. As Peter puts it, “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12). Peter’s hopeful but exclusive message echoes the message of Jesus himself, “I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” Eternal life is to be found only in Jesus Christ. . . If Jesus were one of many ways of salvation, the church could relax a bit, hoping that people might find some other way to the saved from death. But now that Christ is the only way, the urgency of preaching Christ is all the more pressing. There is salvation in no one else but Jesus.³⁶

This is a great reason why we need to preach Christ. We want students to be saved. We also want to obey Jesus. By preaching Christ on campus we are in part fulfilling the great commission.

Greidanus's Preaching Christ from the Old Testament

How do we preach Christ when we are preaching from Genesis, Exodus, Proverbs, or the Psalms? In the history of the church, many have used allegory in an irresponsible way that ignores the intentions of the Old Testament writers. Still, are we reduced to just preaching on the passages that have a clear link to Jesus or are mentioned in the New Testament as speaking about Him? Is the Old Testament relevant to the Christian Church today and students on campus? Liberal scholars' view of the Old

³⁶ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 13.

Testament demonstrates the challenge of connecting Christ to the Old Testament. At least in Boston, liberal theology dominates much of what the seminaries teach and then as a result what the churches teach. Julius Wellhausen (of source-criticism fame) wrote,

I became a theologian because I was interested in the scientific treatment of the Bible; it has only gradually dawned on me that a professor of theology likewise has the practical task of preparing students for service in the Evangelical Church, and that I was not fulfilling this practical task, but rather, in spite of all reserve on my part, was *incapacitating* my hearers for their office.³⁷

The honesty with which Wellhausen speaks is commendable. Sadly, there are many theology professors in Boston and on campuses today across America that follow his teaching and keep future preachers from trusting the scriptures that they are asked to preach. How we view the Bible is important in why and how we will speak about the Bible. If we think the Bible was written primarily by fallen man and thus is fallen, we will have a lower view of the Bible and lack authority to speak God's Word from the Bible. If however, we are convinced that God has spoken through the Bible, we can then preach God's word from the Bible. Sometimes what people think is preaching is really sharing ideas about how to be "good" but is not really from the Biblical text in front of them or really from God. "Much modern theology offers them little more than holy hunches."³⁸ Modern theology reads the Bible backwards. It reads the miracles of the Bible as parables. Modern theologians read the whole Bible as a big confusing parable- a mysterious thing that one can never really understand. This confusion is often what students have heard preached and they need true hope and clarity about who Jesus is and

³⁷ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 17.

³⁸ Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 18.

what He has done. They need to know that the Bible is an understandable book, even for non-theologians. “Long ago Augustine simply summarized, ‘When the Bible speaks, God speaks.’” The role of the preacher is to add clarity, not confusion. “Thus, the preacher’s mission and calling is to explain to God’s people what the Bible means.

How do some liberal scholars view the Old Testament? Friedrich Schleiermacher suggested that it would be better “if the Old Testament were put after the new as an appendix . . .”³⁹ Rudolf Bultmann said “To the Christian faith the Old Testament is not in the true sense God’s Word.”⁴⁰ These views are not representative of all of liberal theology but Christians are still challenged by them and need to know how to interact with the Old Testament. This is an important question if we are to figure out how to preach Christ from the Old Testament. Some would look to church decrees over the centuries to learn how we, as Christians, should relate to the Old Testament. This has some merit, but the best place to learn what we should be doing is looking in the scriptures themselves. Much of the New Testament relates to the Old and can be our guide as to how we should relate to the Old Testament. In Acts 17:11, Luke says that “The Bereans were more receptive than the Thessalonians for they examined the scriptures (Old Testament) every day to see whether these things were so.” The Bereans checked to see if what Paul was preaching (Jesus as the Messiah of the Old Testament) was true. They did this by checking the Old Testament. The Old Testament was highly valued and was the basis for Paul’s claims and the Bereans could check the Old Testament to see if Paul was correct.

³⁹ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 20.

⁴⁰ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 21.

Do we read the Old Testament differently once we become a believer in Christ?

In 2 Corinthians 3:15-16 it says that “Whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.” Paul here talks about how the unconverted, when the Old Testament is read, cannot understand. But when one becomes a Christian, they can see the Old Testament as it relates to Christ.

Does much of the Old Testament relate to Christ or only a few clear prophecies? If we are to preach Christ from the Old Testament, are we reduced to a few verses in Isaiah? Greidanus writes, “We can preach Christ from the Old Testament because the Old Testament itself witnesses to Christ incarnate”.⁴¹ “Not just a few isolated messianic prophecies, but the whole Old Testament bears witness to Jesus”.⁴² It seems clear that Greidanus is convinced that the whole Old Testament bears witness to Jesus. But what is the precedent for the Apostles in their preaching in Acts and their writing of the New Testament? What did the Apostles do?

It is clear that the apostles and the Gospel writers preached Christ from the Old Testament. It is also clear that they could do so with integrity because they believed that the Old Testament spoke of Christ. Finally, it is evident that they learned this Christological understanding of the Old Testament from no one other than Jesus himself, for Jesus not only modeled in his life his fulfillment of the Old Testament but he also taught them “the things about himself in all the scriptures.” (Luke 24:27).⁴³

If the Apostles preached Christ as the fulfillment of the Old Testament, how can we preach about Christ through the Old Testament. “When Paul says that the Rock was

⁴¹ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 55.

⁴² Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 56.

⁴³ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 61.

Christ (1 Cor. 10:4), he perceives the symbolism of the [Old Testament] passage.”⁴⁴

Allegory was a common method of reading and interpreting the Old Testament in the past. But what should we be doing as we read the Old Testament now? Greidau suggests asking, “Does this passage witness to Christ by way of Old Testament expectations, predictions, promises, types, or themes which find their fulfillment in Christ in the New Testament”?⁴⁵ This is a helpful list of ways we can read the Old Testament looking for Christ, and then preach Christ accurately from the Old Testament. This steers us from allegory or complete speculation and yet it is not so limited to only passages that the New Testament refers back to. “To conclude that we can never see a type where the New Testament does not identify it is to confess hermeneutical bankruptcy.”⁴⁶

As college ministers, how can we can read and seek to teach Christ from the Old Testament and take the passage before us seriously? The first step is to find the passage’s meaning to its original audience. What did Moses mean when he wrote this? Or what was David’s experience as he wrote it? What would the Old Testament’s first readers understand these words to mean? But as Christians who have the whole Bible, we don’t stay here. The veil has been lifted and we ask what the Gospel significance of the passage is. Not that every passage is about the cross of Christ. Still, a theme or type or promise might be there that is fulfilled in Christ. We then preach the passage and its relevance to the whole biblical record and our own lives as well.

⁴⁴ Edmund P. Clowney, *Preaching Christ in All of Scripture* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003), 30.

⁴⁵ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 62.

⁴⁶ Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 31.

Conclusion

A Biblical theology of preaching Christ on campus involves focusing on Christ and presenting him, whether from the New Testament or Old, in ways that students today can come to understand that he is the true answer of their problems. Gospel authors, Jesus and Paul took their audiences seriously. So too, campus preachers need to take the student culture seriously. Pictures of the Gospel that Neil Livingstone has suggested (life, adoption and kingdom of God) connect better with students of today than the law court image Evangelicals have traditionally used. From John Piper we saw the urgency for clear Biblical preaching today. From Charles Haddon Spurgeon we saw how we need to preach Christ as our message. From Greidanus we saw exactly what it means to preach Christ and how to do it from the Old Testament. This chapter has helped us see how to preach Christ on campus. We must see how the Bible presents Christ as the solution to our greatest problems. As we seek to communicate Christ on campus, these considerations will help us do it with heart and mind.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to create a workshop that is Biblical, engaging and current on the ways to preach Christ on Campus, this chapter will look at a summary of two interviews of campus preaching teachers, discuss two books about public speaking, consider two seminary textbooks on Biblical preaching, and study books about the university and postmodernism. The American University has changed much in the past 40 years. It is now training international future leaders and it is the future of America's leadership as a college degree is required for most leadership jobs. If campus ministers can preach Christ well on campus, the Gospel can have a huge impact on America and the world.

Interviews with Those Who Developed Preaching Workshops for Campus

Dr. Lisa Lamb

In an effort to draw in knowledge from people who have trained IV staff in preaching, I interviewed Dr. Lisa Lamb, Adjunct Preaching Faculty Fuller Seminary Pasadena, California. Dr. Lamb also served on IV staff in Boston for many years and led a three day staff training in public speaking years ago. She has also taught the IV staff summer seminary course in preaching (approved for credit by Fuller, TEDS, and Gordon Conwell). We spoke on the phone in May, 2011.

Since Dr. Lamb had done this workshop before, both in Boston and for the national movement, she had great insight into what staff need. She suggested having students share about preaching that has moved them personally, because testimonies are

powerful for this generation. Also, as they hear about how preaching has formed them, they will see how God uses preaching today especially on campus. Dr. Lamb also spoke about the unique challenge to preaching on campus. “IV staff have to speak to skeptics, seekers and intellectuals. IV staff have to preach evangelistically. Historically, all preaching has been proclamation. Whitefield and others were always calling people to conversion. It was the goal and purpose of preaching.”¹

Knowing that college students are not always interested in preaching, she had suggestions on the content that was preached. “Preaching needs to inject students with theology that is fascinating. If our theology is on the ground and “earthy” as Jesus was students would want to listen. In preaching, we always need a fresh metaphor, new juicy concepts and new legs for ideas and to say them in new settings. Still we want to stay grounded in Biblical language. We need to be teaching people biblical language but avoiding jargon.”² This sounds similar to some of the literature that will be discussed in this thesis about picturing Jesus in Biblical and yet fresh ways.

Dr. Lamb also offered many helpful suggestions for how she would structure the workshop. Dr. Lamb suggested having the staff write a large group talk before they came to the workshop. She suggested having them give it two times in the workshop, once before the teaching and once after to see the improvement. She suggested recording the talks on a Flip recorder to put it right on their computer. This way they can see their improvement and feel like they accomplished something. She encouraged us to write an evangelistic talk.

¹ Lamb, Lisa. Interview by Tim Leary. Phone Interview. Los Angeles, May 12, 2011.

² Lamb, Lisa. Interview by Tim Leary. Phone Interview. Los Angeles, May 12, 2011.

Keith Johnson, PhD.

Dr. Johnson is the director of the Institute for Biblical Studies for Campus Crusade for Christ. He runs a summer training for hundreds of campus ministers each summer. He personally teaches the Bible communications course for two weeks. He has been doing this for fifteen years now. We spoke on the phone three times in May, 2011.

Dr. Johnson uses two books in his class, *Christ Centered Preaching* and *Jesus Storybook Bible*, and a video of Tim Keller preaching to his young adult church in New York City. The fact that one of two books is a children's Bible is unusual. He said that the book, not only is great theologically, but shows how to illustrate and explain the Bible simply and clearly.³ *Christ Centered Preaching* encourages the focus to be on Christ and to seek deeper change in the students than just behavioral. This text is helpful because he needs to teach how to communicate and preach the Bible well, without requiring the ministers to believe one specific theology. Tim Keller's video is useful for seeing how to speak theologically to a secular audience. Since his class is so large and he wants each person to get to practice speaking, he breaks up into 16 sub groups for practice and feedback.

Dr. Johnson said his first year teaching the course was awful. He realized lecturing at length about preaching, and not giving the class a chance to do it, was a huge mistake. Therefore, he now includes many speaking drills. For example, an eye contact drill, involves having a student share an illustration for three minutes. As they speak, students raise their hands and only put them down when the speaker has looked at them

³ Johnson, Keith. Interview by Tim Leary. Phone Interview. Orlando, May 21, 2011.

for 3 continuous seconds. It's a great way to illustrate how we need to connect with the audience through our eyes.

Public Speaking Skills

Many Americans fear public speaking; in fact, according to a 2001 Gallup poll, 40 percent of adults have a great fear of public speaking.⁴ Jerry Seinfeld says, "According to most studies, people's number one fear is public speaking. Number two is death. Does that sound right? This means to the average person, if you go to a funeral, you're better off in the casket than doing the eulogy."⁵

Therefore, thinking seriously about public speaking is important for preparing a good preaching workshop. Before we consider how to preach Biblically, we must learn how to speak publically. IV staff all graduated from college but they usually lack any teaching on public speaking. In fact, most of the professors they heard speaking in college never had formal training in public speaking. In elementary school and in high school students have years of training in reading and writing but very few have been taught how to speak publically.

Bert Decker, You've Got to be Believed, to Be Heard

The most important point Bert Decker, brings home in *You've Got to be Believed, to Be Heard*, is that until the audience senses they believe you or like you, they will not trust you or listen to you. He has many great examples of this. He has one famous

⁴Brewer, Geoffrey. "Snakes top list of Americans' fears." <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1891/snakes-top-list-americans-fears.aspx> (accessed July 21, 2011).

⁵ Seinfeld, Jerry. "Jerry Seinfeld Quotes." http://thinkexist.com/quotation/according_to_most_studies-people-s_number_one/9010.html (accessed July 27, 2011).

example of a person who changed and became more likeable and now is among the best communicators. He wrote about a transformation that took place in Bill Clinton's speaking. Clinton is thought of and remembered as an effective speaker. But Decker talks about how Clinton was not always as refined. In 1988, when Clinton was supposed to introduce Michael Dukakis, he was told to keep it short, no more than 15 minutes.

Clinton couldn't help himself. He gave a meandering, disorganized, yawn-inducing speech that had party leaders in a panic. After thirty minutes, convention aides started turning the house lights on and off. They even flashed the message "Time's up!" on the teleprompter. Finally, party leader Jim Wright ordered the mechanical podium on which Clinton stood to be lowered. When Bill Clinton felt the platform moving beneath his feet, he finally brought his long winded "introduction" to a close. After that widely criticized disaster, Mr. Clinton learned to deliver better organized, more concise speeches.⁶

Clinton had a long way to go to become the speaker that he is. "Also, Clinton had a tendency to wag his finger at the audience. Finger-pointing makes people feel they are being lectured at and scolded."⁷ His advisors developed a new gesture with a fist with his thumb held up. Only Clinton does it, and it shows passion without looking like he is talking down to his listeners. Clinton had a way of connecting with his audience and learned skills that help him communicate. "Whether giving a formal speech or in one-on-one settings, Mr. Clinton may well be the most brilliant and effective communicator of our time. . . He makes individuals and audiences feel as if he personally cares about them and their needs."⁸ This is why Decker is encouraging readers to learn as communicators.

⁶ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 61.

⁷ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 61.

⁸ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 61.

When speakers prepare for a talk they focus so much on content, but unless the speaker makes a personal connection, people will not receive the content.

Decker also cites famous examples of TV personalities who were not warm and thus didn't connect well with their audience. In his opinion, Dan Rather, the CBS News anchor, was not a good communicator. In fact, Decker predicted that Rather would be fired before the first edition of his book came out (in 1992). This didn't happen, instead, "Rather didn't get the boot from CBS until March 2005, thirteen years after I made that prediction."⁹

CBS was last among the major networks the entire 13 years and should have seen the problem. Decker writes "Rather certainly had the experience, visibility, and the credentials to deliver the news."¹⁰ But when Rather was placed as the head of the CBS news, the ratings plummeted. Why did Dan Rather struggle in this role? "In highly charged confrontations with presidents, and in the combative *60 Minutes* area, Rather had proved he could make the airways crackle with electricity."¹¹

Time magazine offered this appraisal of Dan Rather: "combative and high-strung, Dan Rather remains more reporter than anchor man . . . Rather has never seemed completely comfortable in the anchor chair. A courtly and painstakingly polite man in person, he seems stiff and tense on camera. Even his attempt at spontaneity and good humor look programmed."¹²

Decker wrote that the problem with Dan Rather was that he lacked "warmth," and was "not likable." Rather was great at asking questions and digging for truth in an interview.

⁹ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 12.

¹⁰ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 12.

¹¹ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 13.

¹² Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 14.

During an interview the audience wants you to ask tough questions of the guest. In contrast, an anchor is the host of the show, a host's role is to welcome. If a host is not likable, the show suffers. CBS tried to make Rather likable—they had him wear sweaters and changed the set, even took out the desk, but he couldn't change to be warm. It was like forcing a smile. It looked fake. Eventually CBS changed anchors and ratings have improved (though they still trail).

The “likability factor” also dominates politics according to Decker. “Every presidential election since 1960, . . . the one factor has always been a consistent prognosticator of the final election results: the likability factor.”¹³ He cites how Reagan won in a landslide over Mondale because people saw him as more likable (even though he was from the least liked party and his views were not more popular than Mondale’s).

Is preaching on campus more like being a reporter or an anchor? If campus preachers are like reporters, then being sharp, factual and perhaps critical would be important. If campus preachers are more like news hosts, then being warm is more important. It seems that there are two roles for preaching on campus; one is the weekly role of encouraging the Christians and seekers, their job is more like a Pastor and a daily news anchor. While the other preaching role is a campus evangelist or visiting speaker. This person might be a bit more abrupt or frank, like a investigative reporter, and this might help students commit to Christ. Using Decker’s rubric, he recommends going with warmth to reach people today.

¹³ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 88.

Decker also writes about how a person's voice can make him or her more or less believable. For example, Decker writes, George H.W. Bush sounded like a wimp in 1980 with a high pitch whiny voice. Bush was coached eight years later to use a lower more authoritative sounding voice. "During the Bush-Dukakis debates, Bush's voice had just the right tone of strength and sincerity."¹⁴

An example of not being believable came from my high school (before I was there). Decker shares how Pamela Smart was a school administrator in Hampton, New Hampshire. She seduced a 16 year old student and had him kill her husband. Decker reports that on the stand she had a muted, monotonous voice and aloof composure. She was nicknamed the "Ice Princess." People interviewed on TV talked about how she seemed guilty, "You could tell she was guilty, by the way she talked. Flat, with no emotion. If she was innocent of the accusations against her, you would have heard some emotion in her voice."¹⁵ When making big claims (like being innocent of your husband's murder) a flat plea is not believed. Similarly, if we are asking students to run to God for salvation, but preach it in a monotone voice, no one will think we are serious.

Delivery Affects the Believability

Out of nervousness, it is tempting for campus preachers to read from manuscripts. But it's hard to be compelling and speak from a manuscript. Decker comments that even President Obama's speeches lack some force as they are read from a teleprompter (which campus speakers don't have).¹⁶ If a campus minister reads his sermon, the audience sees

¹⁴ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 147.

¹⁵ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 148.

¹⁶ Decker, Bert. "Why Obama Fails as a Communicator." www.decker.com/blog/2009/12/why-obama-fails-as-a-communicator/ (accessed August 2, 2011).

the top of his head. His eyes are down much of the time. His voice is pointed to the podium instead of talking with people. He is stuck behind the podium and cannot walk around and be more available to connect with the audience.

Spurgeon wrote that it is a travesty to speak of precious truth in a monotone. Spurgeon taught, “neither reading or reciting sermons is best.”¹⁷ While many speakers prepare a manuscript hoping to use it for reference, when they are nervous or after they lose their way, they end up reading from it. The solution is to preach from notes and an outline. The outline helps the preacher use cue words to remember a point or a story and yet it keeps him from reading continuously. If indeed more people have fear of public speaking than death, the outline will hopefully help them overcome their fears.

The Big Idea

On campus, it is most common to hear a three point sermon. However, the research done in the communication field shows that it is best to have one big idea when giving a speech.^{18 19} While three point sermons show progression or movement, three ideas are hard to remember; especially for students attached to cell phones and the internet. *Made to Stick*, a book about communicating ideas, emphasizes keeping it simple. “If you argue ten points, even if each is a good point, when they get back to the jury room they won’t remember any.’ To strip an idea down to its core, we must be

¹⁷ Shepherd’s Notes - *Spurgeon’s Lectures to my Students* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 1998), 29.

¹⁸ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 77-78.

¹⁹ Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 21.

masters of exclusion... proverbs are ideal.”²⁰ The problem with hitting on three ideas (or ten) is that the chance of students remembering your ideas decreases.

Haddon Robinson has written that good speeches and sermons should have one big idea. “Three or four ideas not related to a more inclusive idea do not make a message; they make three or four sermonettes all preached at one time.”²¹ Reul L. Howe listened to hundreds of taped sermons and held discussions with laypeople. He concluded that sermons often contain too many ideas.²² It seems like most preachers on campus have three sermons (three ideas) and sometimes go on tangents that seem to add a few more ideas. Rarely is it clear what the whole message is about. If they focused on a big idea, their message would be more effective and memorable. “A sermon should be a bullet, not a buckshot. Instead of dealing with many topics with no depth, it is better to go deeper with one idea. Ideally each sermon is the explanation, interpretation and application of a single dominant idea supported by other ideas, all drawn from one passage or several passages of scripture”.²³ Don Miller said, “Every sermon should have a theme, and that theme should be the theme of the portion of Scripture on which it is based.”²⁴ The benefit of preaching a big idea is that it is simple to preach one idea; it is something that the audience can follow. Still, it is to be a big idea, one worth thinking on. The big idea of a sermon should be something that can change your life.

²⁰ Chip Heath & Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*, (New York: Random House, 2008), 16.

²¹ Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed., (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 35.

²² Reuel L. Howe, *Partners in Preaching: Clergy and Laity in Dialogue* in Biblical Preaching (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), p. 35

²³ Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed., (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 35.

²⁴ Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed., (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 36.

Young speakers who don't speak every week often try to dump all their ideas on an audience. This is the "buck shot" technique or really the "dump truck" method. Instead, preachers should pursue depth with one main idea. "If you say three things, you don't say anything."²⁵ But focusing on one idea is difficult to do. The hardest part is finding what the main part of the passage is and focusing on that without adding things that are not central. "Journalists obsess about their leads. Don Wycliff, a winner of prizes for newspaper editorial writing, says, "I've always been a believer that if I've got two hours in which to write a story, the best investment I can make is to spend the first hour and forty-five minutes of it getting a good lead, because after that, everything will come easily."²⁶ In Clinton's campaign they found focus with the phrase, "It's the economy, stupid."²⁷ When the pressure increased, they remembered what their message was and stuck to it.

Preaching for Heart Change

Charles Zimmerman, preaching professor at Biblical Theological Seminary, taught about the difference between calling for obedience like the Pharisees did and calling for change in a graceful way. Much preaching in evangelical churches focuses on behavior change and trying to be more holy or more like an Old Testament person (David, Moses) or more like Jesus. The problem with this focus is that it doesn't equip us to change; it just demands us to change. Like the Pharisees in the Gospels, this type of preaching adds burdens rather than seeking to lift burdens for listeners. Calling for behavioral changes without including the hope and power needed to elicit the changes

²⁵ Chip Heath & Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*, (New York: Random House, 2008), 33.

²⁶ Chip Heath & Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*, (New York: Random House, 2008), 32.

²⁷ Chip Heath & Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*, (New York: Random House, 2008), 33.

only creates discouragement and legalism. Instead, a graceful sermon calls for change but only once the true issue or idol is identified. The true problem is not behavior, but a heart that needs Jesus and the Holy Spirit to transform it. The Gospel preacher should expose the true need as shown in the Bible passage being considered and in the lives of the students present and then point to the true solution in Christ. Christ has the power to change us and his love is large enough to bring about the change we need. The Gospels are full of stories of how Jesus showed his power to change people's lives for the better. This is what students need to hear.²⁸

Made to Stick, Dan Heath and Chip Heath

Dan and Chip Heath, in *Made to Stick*, point out how some ideas stay in our head while many ideas quickly are forgotten. Speakers have a challenge overcoming the “Curse of knowledge.” “The curse of knowledge” leads to forgetfulness, but “the power of story for communicating” will help people hear what you are saying and remember, it will “stick” if done right.

The “curse of knowledge” is a common problem in public speaking and preaching.²⁹ By the time preachers speak, they have gained vocabulary and understanding beyond the audience. Then they often speak in a way that the audience can't understand. It's difficult to remember back to before they learned the information and speak in a way that helps the audience learn or understand what's being preached. This was shown in a tapping game where one person would tap the beat of a song to the

²⁸ Charles Zimmerman, class notes Biblical Theological Seminary, January 2003.

²⁹ Chip Heath & Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*, (New York: Random House, 2008), 20.

other person.³⁰ The second person would write down a guess of the name of the song. The tappers thought the listeners would be right 75% of the time while they were only right 2%. The tappers could not imagine not understanding the song.³¹

IV staff make the same mistake. They cannot remember what it is like to be a freshman, new to Bible study or to fellowship and so they speak from a more complex understanding of God's word and theology. The freshmen are often lost, and we forgot how to speak their language. This curse of knowledge is found not only in preachers but in other disciplines as well. The Heath brothers point out "It's easy to graduate from medical school or an MBA program without ever taking a class in communication."³²

The Heaths suggest that one of the most important parts of communicating is story-telling. When people are told stories their minds join in the story and it is like they imagine themselves experiencing the story.

To circle back to the world of sticky ideas, what we're suggesting is that the right kind of story, is effectively a simulation. Stories are like flight simulators for the brain.³³ Consider Jerrod of Subway: Jarrod was in college and weighed 425lbs and saw an advertisement for subway offering seven sandwiches under seven grams of fat. He decided he would try one. He kept doing it and lost 245lbs by what he calls the 'Subway diet.' The commercial introduces Jarrod, "This is Jarrod." The information is told in narrative form. The ad came out just before New Year's when many are thinking about resolutions. That year, Subway increased sales by 30%. This is an example of the power of stories. People thought, "If Jarrod can do it, so can I." Or at least they thought; "Hey these subs can't be that bad for you if a guy lost that much weight eating them."

³⁰ Chip Heath & Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*, (New York: Random House, 2008), 19.

³¹ Chip Heath & Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*, (New York: Random House, 2008), 20.

³² Chip Heath & Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*, (New York: Random House, 2008), 245.

³³ Chip Heath & Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*, (New York: Random House, 2008), 213.

This generation of preachers needs to use stories to connect the big idea to the listener. Stories inspire and can help us want to follow Christ, but finding the right story is another challenge. “Stories can almost single-handedly defeat the ‘Curse of Knowledge.’ The hardest part of using stories effectively is making sure they reflect your core message.”³⁴ The temptation can be to include a great story that doesn’t really back up your main point. It is a challenge to tell stories in an interesting way with a climax and a resolution that agrees with your main point.

Fallen Condition Focused

Bryan Chapell in *Christ Centered Preaching* uses the phrase, *fallen condition focus* to emphasize how scripture speaks to all of us who are broken and incomplete (or fallen). “Since God designed the Bible to complete us for the purposes of his glory, the necessary implication is that in some sense we are incomplete. . . Paul writes, ‘Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope (Romans 15:4).’³⁵ Every scripture in the Bible served a purpose to those it was written to thousands of years ago and it serves a purpose for us today. When we look at a text of the Bible, we have to consider, why is this here? What is God trying to teach us that we didn’t know, believe, do or understand?

The FCF (Fallen Condition Focus) can vary greatly from text to text, and can vary in sermons preached on the same text, preachers

³⁴ Chip Heath & Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*, (Random House, 2008), 237.

³⁵ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 50.

need to make sure the purpose of their sermons remains a purpose of the passage. Your FCF will remain faithful to the text and identify powerful purposes for your sermon if you ask three questions: 1) What does the text say?; 2) What concern(s) did the text address in its context?; and 3) What do listeners share in common with those to whom it was written or the one by whom it was written?

The FCF is a concept that helps students see that they need what Jesus is offering in the passage. “The FCF is usually directly stated or strongly implied in the introduction portion of the sermon.”³⁶ This is “the need” of the sermon that we can relate to. Chapell challenges preachers to always first ask “What is an FCF that required the writing of this text?”³⁷ If we can see the link from the receivers of the passage to the students today, we will be able to preach the good news God intends.

The more specific the statement of the FCF early in the sermon, the more powerful and poignant will be the message. An FCF of “Not Being Faithful to God” is not nearly so riveting as “How Can I Maintain My Integrity When My Boss Has None?” Generic statements of the FCF gives the preacher little guidance for the organization of the sermon, and the congregation little reason for listening.³⁸

The FCF frames the sermon as a question that needs to be answered. The Bible passage is the answer but before we get to the answer we need to be seeking an answer. The job of the preacher is to draw out the need in the passage and relate that to the students.

³⁶ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 51.

³⁷ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 51.

³⁸ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005) 51.

God-Honoring Preaching

Two questions we must face when preaching are, who are we aiming to please and how do we do it? It is tempting to want to please our listeners, but God is the most important person to please. “When we preach, God is the true audience of our efforts.”³⁹ It is not that people don’t matter. People do matter. But if people matter most, then like Aaron with the golden calf in the Bible, we will follow them instead of leading them to Christ. We want people to know Christ and to live for him. If our ultimate goal is to reach people instead of honoring God, we may sacrifice honoring God along the way.

To honor God, preachers must focus on the uniquely Christian message that Jesus is the savior. “How does the centrality of Jesus Christ affect the way that I handle the biblical texts? If a thoughtful Muslim or a Jew would be satisfied with my interpretation of the Old Testament, could it really be Christian?”⁴⁰ Even if we are talking about the law of the Old Testament, we must preach Christ. A sub-Christian message merely advocates morality and compassion and does not focus on the Saviors or Spirit. “Exhortations for moral behavior apart from the work of the Savior denigrate into mere Phariseeism.”⁴¹

According to Chapell, one of the largest challenges in preaching is that Jesus doesn’t exist in two thirds of the Bible. Yet the whole Bible points to Jesus. In Luke 24, Jesus says that it is all about him. Each sermon should help the audience know him more.

³⁹ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 32.

⁴⁰ Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed., 32.

⁴¹ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 274.

But how do expository preachers infuse the redemptive essentials (i.e., Christ-centeredness) into every sermon without superimposing ideas foreign to many texts? Many Old Testament passages make no explicit reference to Christ's "substitutionary, penal death and bodily resurrection." New Testament texts abound that commend moral behaviors with no mention of the cross, the resurrection, the Holy Spirit, or God's enabling grace. Can we really be expositors and bring out of a text what is does not *seem* to mention? The answer lies in the axiom mentioned earlier: Context is part of the text.⁴²

To preach Biblically, we need to put each passage in the context of the greater story. The Gospel about Christ is the greater context and on campus there is no room for a message that doesn't get back to Christ. Chappell points out that God is greater than any single passage. "Because God is God, no single verse, no single passage, no single book (of the Bible) contains all we need to know about him."⁴³ We need to consider the greater Gospel as we consider one single passage. "The branch of Bible study devoted to examining Scripture in the light of the overarching themes that unite all its particulars is called Biblical theology."⁴⁴

Biblical theology will read the passage as it was written and then consider how it fits in with the great Bible story. "Christ-centered preaching rightly understood does not seek to discover where Christ is mentioned in every text but to disclose where every text stands in relation to Christ." This is an important difference. We do not need to "find" Jesus in every passage of the Old Testament or the New Testament, but we do need to show how this passage relates to Christ. Christ is the center of Bible and each passage

⁴² Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 275.

⁴³ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 275.

⁴⁴ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 275.

has a place that relates to him. About Charles Spurgeon it is said, “no matter where he began in Scripture, he always took a shortcut to the cross.”⁴⁵ Chapell encourages asking “What does this text reveal of God’s nature that provides redemption? What does this text reflect of human nature that requires redemption.”⁴⁶

It is tempting to make humans the heroes of the sermon, “Be like Moses, David, or Esther.” But Biblical characters were human. They did not save us and the Scriptures make this very clear. Preachers come to their congregations not to be David followers but Christ followers. As Sidney Greidanus says, “God is the ultimate hero of every text.”⁴⁷ As preachers to the campus we need to find the way that Jesus is the hero of the passage and how he is the hero of the students lives as well. “Faithful expository preaching unfolds every text in the context of its redemptive import. . . When my listeners walk out the doors of this sanctuary to perform God’s will, with whom do they walk?”⁴⁸ We want the students to know that they just heard a Christian message, that Jesus is The Savior and The King. If they know that, we have largely succeeded.

James Boice and the Primacy of Preaching

James Boice sees preaching as perhaps the most important means of grace and he encourages those that want to grow to find the best preaching they can.⁴⁹ “We should be

⁴⁵ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 280.

⁴⁶ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 284.

⁴⁷ Sidney Greidanus, *Sola Scriptura in Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 286.

⁴⁸ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 295.

⁴⁹ James Montgomery Boice, “The Foolishness of Preaching,” in *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching* (Orlando: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2008), 26.

very careful in our Christian lives to expose ourselves to the best teaching and attend the best churches available.”⁵⁰ This will certainly help us as young preachers to the university today, but it is also something we can encourage students and those in the university to do. Boice also shares how he has seen many ministers who do not believe the Bible. “So many ministers really do not believe the Bible.”⁵¹ There are seminaries that teach doubt and not faith and thus their graduates lack so much and the church suffers. “One reason why we have such a dearth of leadership in our age is that those who could and should be leaders are so anxious to please people, their constituency or their superiors, that they are afraid to lead and so become paralyzed.”⁵²

For Christ and the University, Keith and Gladys Hunt

The University has had a huge influence on Christianity in the US and around the world. The University has changed dramatically in the past, yet the move of God remains constant. Keith and Gladys Hunt chronicle how Bible movements have a long history of starting in the University in their book *For Christ and the University*.

John Wycliffe (1380’s) became a popular lecturer at Oxford University even as an undergraduate. He initiated Biblical reform by translating the Bible from Latin into English. “Then he organized students into preaching bands, sending them into the

⁵⁰ James Montgomery Boice, “The Foolishness of Preaching,” in *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching* (Orlando: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2008), 26.

⁵¹ James Montgomery Boice, “The Foolishness of Preaching,” in *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching* (Orlando: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2008), 27.

⁵² James Montgomery Boice, “The Foolishness of Preaching,” in *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching* (Orlando: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2008), 33.

countryside to explain the Gospel. Wycliffe contended that Scripture was the supreme authority in matters of salvation".⁵³

John Huss studied at Oxford University and took his notes of Wycliffe's teaching back with him to Prague. "Huss spoke powerfully about the sufficiency of Scripture in matters of life and faith. He became a faculty member and later a dean of faculty in the University. His teaching was the start of what later became the reformation. In 1415, he was killed for heresy. Erasmus taught in Cambridge and published a translation of a parallel new testament, with Greek and Latin lined up. This showed the errors in the Latin Vulgate. Erasmus also taught students the New Testament, many of whom would later be burned at the stake by the Catholic Church. "In his rooms at Cambridge, Erasmus restored the Bible to the church."⁵⁴

God touched John Calvin while he was studying law in Orleans, France: "by a sudden conversion, He tamed my heart and made it teachable."⁵⁵ After Calvin was converted he shared his newfound faith with others in his law school. When news got out about the faith of other law students, Calvin fled to Geneva and "became the leader of the French Protestants (Huguenots), from whom the English Puritans received their theology."⁵⁶

William Tyndale was a student at Cambridge University and his faith was greatly enhanced by his association with earnest Christians there. Tyndale started translating the New Testament into English, the first effort since Wycliffe. Tyndale was also

⁵³ Keith & Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 23.

⁵⁴ Keith & Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 24.

⁵⁵ Keith & Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 25.

⁵⁶ Keith & Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 26.

martyred.⁵⁷ The Hunts, summarize the work of God at the start of the reformation with, “The reformation did not begin with the nailing of the Ninety-five Theses to the door of the Wittenberg Church... It had been coming for a hundred years as thoughtful, courageous students and professors made inquiry into truth and propagated their convictions. The Reformation was born in the University.”⁵⁸

Susannah Wesley sent a devotional with her sons Charles and John as they headed to Oxford for University. The Wesley's were repulsed by Oxford's rampant immorality and decided to start a Christian accountability group, to help keep its members from falling. This holy club's first convert was George Whitefield. His conversion ignited a revival in Britain and later in the 13 colonies of America.⁵⁹

Jonathan Edwards (the great awakening preacher) was so committed to the university that he helped start Dartmouth College to reach Native Americans with the Gospel and towards the end of his life served as president to Princeton College.⁶⁰

In 1806, at Williams College, there was a student prayer meeting that committed them to reaching Asia; the Haystack prayer meeting started student missions in America. The YMCA and the YWCA became the largest youth movement of Christians. “The time was right for a movement like this, and nothing since has touched the religious life of the total student body in the universities of America with the same impact as that of intercollegiate YMCA movement.”⁶¹ In the space of a generation, 175,000 students

⁵⁷ Keith & Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 27.

⁵⁸ Keith & Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 27.

⁵⁹ Keith & Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 29.

⁶⁰ Keith & Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 33.

⁶¹ Keith & Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 45.

signed the (foreign missionary) pledge and 21,000 went overseas from North American Colleges.⁶² Unfortunately, “Ever so subtly and over a period of time, ideas of ecumenicity meant giving ground to the more liberal theologies.”⁶³ Hardly anyone today even knows YMCA/YWCA was a dynamic and powerful Christian mission for youth.

Indeed, the university has had a huge influence on Christianity in the US and around the world. As has been shown from this historical survey of large Christian events that happened in the university or by people of the university, it becomes clear that God has worked in the university to spread the Gospel.

Preaching to a Post-everything World, Zack Eswine

Many students today are influenced by and think in a postmodern way. Postmodernism is a response to modernism and emphasizes a fluid way of thinking about the world and what is right and wrong. “The postmodern age is an image-rich age where narratives and stories can present the gospel and make it clear.”⁶⁴ The “Modern” worldview has the understanding that things progress and improve over time. Modernism says that truth wins and there is a right and wrong. Evangelical teaching in the past understood the world largely from a “modern” point of view. Apologetics and doctrine are usually taught with an understanding that there is a “right and wrong” that we can know.

To preach to post-modern students, we are wise to include less of an appeal through logic and more of an appeal through experience. For example, Zack Eswine, a

⁶² Keith & Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 43.

⁶³ Keith & Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 49.

⁶⁴ Zack Eswine, *Preaching to a Post-Everything World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 61.

homiletics professor at Covenant Theological Seminary, who wrote *Preaching to a Post-everything World* was from a broken family and was smoking cigarettes at age five. He writes his book with the goal of reaching the kind of person he was. The author sharing his brokenness as he wants to reach broken people is an example of the postmodern approach.

Post-moderns today are not the only ones who tell stories. “When asked, ‘Who is my neighbor?’ Jesus in effect does not say, ‘Let me give you three Hebrew roots on the word neighbor.’ What he does say is, ‘A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho . . .’”⁶⁵ Jesus can be our model of reaching post-moderns. However, evangelical preaching on campus sometimes focuses on individual words of a passage and not on relating the passage to the audience through story. Preaching Christ to a post-modern audience is challenging because neat and tidy categories implode.⁶⁶ What a Christian “looks like” is now blurred.

Francis Collins, the longtime head of the Human Genome Project, is one of America’s most visible scientists. In his book *The Language of God*, Collins writes, “The God of the Bible is also the God of the genome.” Collins believes in evolution and an earth that is fifteen billion years old. Yet, when asked if he believes in the virgin birth, Collins answers, “I do” unequivocally. He upholds the miracles of the Bible and the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. Collins is an evangelical. Similarly, Ann Rice, the famed vampire novelist and noted atheist had become a follower of Jesus. Although she is still socially liberal on issues such as homosexuality, she has become a thoughtful and conscientious defender of the Bible, particularly the historicity of the Gospels and the truth of their claims about who Jesus is.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Calvin Miller, *Preaching: The Art of Narrative Exposition in Preaching to a Post-Everything World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008) 61.

⁶⁶ Zack Eswine, *Preaching to a Post-Everything World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 15.

⁶⁷ Zack Eswine, *Preaching to a Post-Everything World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 15.

Both Francis Collins, a Bible believing scientist, who also believes in evolution, and Anne Rice, a writer, who is a defender of the Bible and the historicity of the Gospels, believing in homosexuality, look different from Christians in an earlier generation. Indeed, the lines have blurred.

Students also look different. Preaching to them therefore makes the task more challenging. This generation is not as familiar with Christianity. Tim Keller reminds us “In a Christianized, less secular culture, you can jump right to commitment . . . and go right to a gospel presentation, . . . but secular people have many more stages to go through.”⁶⁸

Indeed, Jesus shared the Gospel with people who were still sinning. As they heard the Gospel and met Jesus they repented, but not before. “There are matters of discipleship that newer Christians are not ready for and more mature Christians and church members require.”⁶⁹ Eswine encourages preachers to speak as if non-Christian people are present.⁷⁰ This is particularly helpful on campus as students can come to a Christian meeting before they believe. This helps us make room for them in our messages.

When seeking to reach postmodern twenty-somethings, a preacher may neglect or even become cynical toward traditional moderns. Those who preach to the poor may unwittingly exclude those who are wealthy. While we recognize that preachers are sometimes called to reach particular people groups, we need each other’s help to disarm our expository

⁶⁸ Zack Eswine, *Preaching to a Post-Everything World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 15.

⁶⁹ Zack Eswine, *Preaching to a Post-Everything World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 15.

⁷⁰ Zack Eswine, *Preaching to a Post-Everything World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 86.

prejudices. Both nostalgic and inventive preachers can suffer from expository prejudices; none of us are immune to them.⁷¹

As we seek to reach the campus and preach the Gospel, the challenge remains how we can do this in a way that encourages students to grow in the Gospel and then transition to churches. If students coming to our college ministry become perfectly comfortable with a ministry for post-moderns and there are no post-modern churches (at least in New England), then have we really served the students well? We need to help college students connect with churches that are run by and largely for moderns (or pray for church plants that reach post-moderns).

Testimonies are Powerful for Post-Moderns

Eswine quotes a pastor who is realizing the difference in how the generations listen. A pastor reveals, “People in my congregation who are my age can appreciate when I am transparent in the pulpit. But I am realizing that for the younger people in the congregation my transparency is a must.”⁷² This generation watches reality TV. They want to see life lived out in front of them. If you tell them three ways to live life, you miss them. If you share stories, especially personal ones, they will see what you are trying to say.

This generation listens through stories primarily. Jesus was asked many questions and he often had a story to tell in response. Paul’s conversion testimony is shared three times in the book of Acts.⁷³ Testimony and story capture the heart and teach the mind.

⁷¹ Zack Eswine, *Preaching to a Post-Everything World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 82.

⁷² Zack Eswine, *Preaching to a Post-Everything World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 63.

⁷³ Acts 9, Acts 22, Acts 26.

Preaching to University students needs more Biblically guided life stories and examples. “Preaching is mentoring.”⁷⁴ Post-moderns are less interested in being preached at, but still they need to be taught.

Conclusion

This chapter was an overview of the literature that has an influence in creating the preaching workshop. We are seeking to create a workshop that is Biblical, engaging and current on the ways to preach Christ on Campus. This chapter looked at a summary of two interviews of campus preaching teachers, discuss two books about public speaking, considered two seminary textbooks on Biblical preaching, and study the university and postmodernism. This study was to learn the teaching needed to create a preaching workshop that can equip the next generation of student ministers.

⁷⁴ Zack Eswine, *Preaching to a Post-Everything World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 85.

CHAPTER 4

THE PREACHING WORKSHOP

Workshop Description and Goals

By looking at how we ran our preaching workshop, hopefully this will give a basic guide to how to run a preaching workshop for others. The need to adapt this to the audience is important. InterVarsity in Boston has gifted staff and students academically but they often lack knowledge for the Bible that would be present in other settings.

This workshop consisted of two days of preaching training for IV staff in the Boston area and included fourteen participants and two teachers. We met at Park Street Church in downtown Boston. The participants were mostly young staff with a few veterans in the midst. Very few had taken a preaching course before and most had not taken a public speaking course. We sought to impart confidence to the young staff that they could preach Biblically and effectively at the student meetings. My co-teacher was Bruce Cooke who is from South Africa and graduated from Covenant Seminary in St. Louis and has been on staff with IV for 9 years. We tried to split up the topics to use each teacher's strength and seminary training. I was the *Biblical Preaching* teacher, while Bruce was the *Christ Centered Preaching* expert.

In order to maximize our time we assigned some pre-course reading from *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching*. We assigned three articles by Haddon Robinson and articles by Bill Hybels, Bryan Chapell, Tim Keller, and John Piper. We also assigned a video of Tim Keller preaching on you tube. The goal of the pre-workshop work was to help participants start to think about preaching and to introduce them to some of the best

American preachers alive today. We hoped they would learn from these preachers as they sought to follow their example.

Preaching Workshop Syllabus - How to Prepare Large Group Talks

Taught by Tim Leary & Bruce Cooke

Day 1

- Welcome game, the passion of preaching to the university, and outline of workshop objectives
- Choosing a passage, Fallen Condition Focus, Christ-Centered Preaching

Day 2

- One Big Idea for the heart and mind & what is the Bible all about (Biblical Theology)
- Organizing a talk
- Speaking to students' heart & mind (delivery style, the University & Post Modernism)
- Preaching practice and encouragement

Recommended Resources for future study

- A study Bible
- *Christ Centered Preaching*- Bryan Chapell
- *Biblical Preaching*- Haddon Robinson
- *The Supremacy of God in Preaching* – John Piper
- *Spurgeon's Lectures to my Students* (Charles Spurgeon)
- *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard* (public speaking)- Bert Decker

- *Made to Stick* (communication)- Chip Heath & Dan Heath
- Readings from Haddon Robinson's book: *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching*

Session 1: Passion to Preach Christ in the University

Taught by Tim Leary

Goals

- Give each participant an opportunity to stand and speak during introductions.
- Come to appreciate how God has used preaching in the lives of college students.
- Outline what is to come in the course and why preaching is valuable on campus today.

1. Introductions and Practice Speaking

To foster community and consider the challenges of public speaking, each participant shared their worst public speaking moment with another. Then one at a time they were to stand to introduce their partner and their story to the group. This is to help us get to know each other, be interesting and be a pretest of public speaking for the workshop.

Several participants found this exercise a challenge. One woman played with her sweater as she spoke. Another didn't look at people but looked at the ceiling. Some could tell a good story and some couldn't (might be that their partner didn't give them a good story). They did a pretty good job but not a great job. It was just an assignment, but MBA type students would always try to shine. We wanted to equip the participants to learn how to speak well to college students and be ready to speak in short notice.

2. Public Speaking- the Challenges

I told them that more people fear public speaking over death. I then asked them, “Why are people so afraid?”

They shared different ideas about how people worry about being judged. They spoke of how they can feel vulnerable while standing up to speak. We must consider this fear as it is so pronounced. An opportunity to share more: ask them to share their worst public speaking moment. It will help talk about what went wrong and why.

3. Why Preaching is Powerful

I then asked them about the best preaching they have heard, either on campus or in church. What made it so effective. Many shared about who impacted them and how it happened. They were encouraged by different things but they were all encouraged to follow Jesus through this speaker.

I then shared about my favorite preacher and cautioned them about the challenge of listening to famous preachers. They are great models but can also intimidate us. They are polished and we are just starting out. I told them, my favorite preacher is Craig Garriott, the pastor of my home church in Baltimore. Each week he tried to show God's work in his life; he shared his struggle and trust in Jesus. In our small church, we knew him and loved to listen to his stories to be encouraged in Jesus. He taught not only for our mind to change but for our heart to be touched by Jesus. I felt motivated and instructed to follow Christ with my whole self, heart and mind through his preaching.

Then, I lectured for a time. I first had them read Romans 10:14-15 which is often used when discussing missions and sending, but it also refers to why preaching is so

important. “How can they believe if they have no one to preach to them?” Preaching is critically important in helping people experience Christ. People in our generation are scared of the word “preach.” They don’t want to be “preached at.” They merely want discussion. But the word “preach” is used in the Bible over 100 times. God has a place for truth telling and preaching. We do need to consider how to speak in a way that people can hear, but preaching God’s truth and love, we must, as ministers. To support this view, I used an example from the ministry of the apostle Paul. The apostle Paul wrote probably the most theologically dense and complete books in the New Testament, the book of Romans. Still, reading the letter to the Romans was not enough. In Romans 1:15 he writes, “I am eager to preach the Gospel to you.” Paul wanted to go and preach even after he had just written them a through letter. In some, way his writing was not enough, he still longed to preach the Gospel to them.

Three key questions:

- a. What is preaching and why does it matter?
- b. Is preaching the same as teaching?
- c. Why does God call on people to preach the good news?

We then looked at Jesus’ words. In Mark 1:38 he said, “Let us go somewhere else- to the nearby villages- so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.” Jesus came to preach in the nearby towns. He wanted to keep his focus on preaching because that is why he came. As we follow him, preaching is a natural way to share the good news and encourage his followers.

4. Our Big Goal- Confidence to Speak from the Scriptures

Our primary goal was for the staff to gain the tools needed to confidently prepare a Biblically-based message that motivates students to follow Jesus. We want each participant to have confidence, that they know what God wants to say and can say it in a way that people will hear the message.

We used a preaching video of Tim Keller to emphasize that the Bible is about God. Jesus is the main character of the Bible. The Bible is about God and His purposes in the world. People play a supporting role in God's story.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkNa6tLWrqk>

I told them how John Piper refers to the teaching of Jonathan Edwards: preaching is not just a bonus to those who are already headed to heaven, but the people are between heaven and hell and they need a Word from God to urge them to Him. The urgency is key and pleading with the audience is appropriate. This is not a mechanical view of eternal security.¹ We are to help preserve the saints. This theology gives an urgency to preaching that is lacking today. Most think that once people "pray to receive Christ," they are "all set" with God. I wanted to help them see that preaching is not just a skill, but a huge honor and privilege. I told participants that God will use their preaching to perform miracles. Some will turn from death to life. John Piper prays for two hours the morning that he preaches. Preaching is a critical part of how God draws people to Himself. It is vital and worth us trying to preach well.

¹ John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*, (Grand Rapids; Baker Books, 2004), 62.

Bill Hybels, in his article (pre-course reading) on the high call of preaching talked about how he wanted to improve his preaching. He listened to great preaching and he found a key element was that each message had an urgency- the speaker had a message to give and it seemed vitally important. If you survey the great speakers for Jesus, they have all had an urgent message to share. They were not preachers because they didn't like other jobs, rather they felt compelled to speak. This is true of the Apostles as well. Even under persecution, they could not stop speaking the truth.

If you believe the Bible is true (2 Timothy 3:16) then you will have a lot to say and the authority to say it. If you think the Bible is nice but not always true, you will lack the assurance to speak well from the Bible (and you will encourage others to question the Bible). You will share stories but lack conviction. So, each of us should consider the message before us, the Gospel; do we really trust the story or do we simply see it as "nice?" This will mark our preaching more than any techniques that can be taught. We each must decide what we will do with the Gospel as it is the source of preaching.

Session 2: Christ Centered Preaching

Taught by Bruce Cooke

Goals

- Choose a passage for a talk (from a theme to passage).
- Identify a fallen condition focus in the passage.

- Relate the fallen condition focus to the audience and apply the redemption offered in the passage to the audience.²

1. Choosing a Passage

The objective is to develop a sound process to choose a Biblical passage for a topical talk.

Steps to get to Objective:

- a. Identify the problem/situation (given a topic, now have to choose a passage)
- b. Discuss common mistakes that can be made
- c. Present a sound process by which staff can choose a Biblical passage
- d. Illustrate by example

You get the email, the phone call asking you to speak at a large group in a few weeks. So you ask the obvious question, 'What would you like me to speak on?' and the answer is, 'Well, we are doing a series on Jesus and how he satisfies our longings and we thought it would be good for you to talk about Jesus and _____.' So you ask, 'Is there a passage you have in mind?' and you get the response, 'No, we thought you could choose that.'

So, what happens next? Probably nothing for a few weeks or months but then you suddenly realize that in a few days you have to speak and you don't even know which

² This section was prepared, and taught by Bruce Cooke and was largely based on teaching and writings of Bryan Chappell.

passage. So, for a bit now we are going to talk about choosing a passage to talk on a given topic.

The case for using a single passage and let it “trump” the topic is important. If we are to preach the Bible, we must let the Bible speak and we cannot bend it to what we want it to say (or the topic assigned, a common temptation). We might use multiple passages but there is a chance of losing the audience and not showing the limits of the passage and the whole implication of the passage. We encourage staff to use a concordance (or study Bible), and pray and see which sections of scripture speak to the topic. Then we need to really study that passage in context. Finally we need to preach that passage and let the topic that we were assigned be submitted to God’s Word before us.

2. Fallen Condition Focus

The objective is that staff would be able to identify the FCF in a passage and know the value of using it to develop their talk. We are identifying the common, underlying reality of living in a world that is fallen that links the original audience to us. So, we will start by looking at some Scripture that will lead us to a definition of the FCF, then we will look at how we go about identifying the FCF and I will share why I have found this incredibly valuable in giving a talk. We will also have discussion/question time thrown in as I feel it is necessary before getting some practice.

a. What is the Biblical basis for FCF?

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for

every good work” (2 Timothy 3: 16-17). In the King James Version, the last phrase is “so that the man of God may perfectly, thoroughly equipped unto every good work.” It is that word “perfect” we stumble on. It is actually the Greek word “makarios,” which means “complete.” All Scripture is given for these various reasons, teaching, rebuke, correction...to complete us. Now, if Scripture is given to complete us, what does that necessarily say about us? We are incomplete. Apart from what God provides, we are incomplete. We are fallen creatures. We have holes in us that the Scripture is designed to fill by telling us of the work of God. Complete/perfect. Scripture has this purpose in being used by God to mature us, complete us, perfect us.

“Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope” (Romans 15:4). Scripture has the purpose to provide hope in our condition. In fact, Chapell argues that the common denominator of all great preaching is that it gives hope. Not just information, although that is obviously present, but ultimately great preaching is about hope.

This is why identifying the FCF is so important because it moves a talk from simply being about information to being about transformation. It moves the talk from being a lecture to being a sermon that is relevant to the struggles and longings of human life. The FCF is what has been known as the ‘burden of the text’, the reason why it was written, the ‘why’ question that lies behind the ‘what does this mean’ question. So, here is Chapell’s definition of the FCF:

The FCF is the mutual human condition that contemporary believers (us) share with those for or by whom the text was written that requires the grace of the passage to manifest God's glory in His people.

This means that when we start looking at a passage we are asking the question, what is the burden of this passage, why was this written, what is the FCF and where is the hope? Not just for 'them' but for me. This means we are not ready to preach on a passage until we have identified why the Holy Spirit has placed this text in the Word of God. No matter how well we know the passage. Or how many facts we have about the passage or background context. Unless we know the answer to this 'why' question, we are not ready to proceed.

An example: justification ... lots of places we can go to find it, but the question we need to start with is not what does justification mean (although we should do that) but why does Paul (and the Holy Spirit) write about justification. Romans 3: 24 ... is it that the people he was writing to were seeking to justify themselves before God some other way? In what way? By their religious duties that they were doing? Maybe they didn't think they were that bad? Maybe they were saved by grace but were living by works now in an attempt to prove to God made a good choice in dying for them? Maybe there were being influenced by the culture of their day, or the lingering Jewish culture, that was about outward appearances?

We can see here, then, that these questions get at the burden of the text ... the mutual human condition that we share with those for whom and by whom the text was

written. Now my heart is ready to hear why justification by faith can bring me hope, and can address some area of ‘incompleteness’ in my faith.

When we speak, we can start with an illustration that identifies with the fallen condition focus of the passage, perhaps one that is similar to a challenge students face today. If you were doing a talk on Romans 7 (Paul did what he didn’t want to do, and didn’t do what he wanted to do), you might start like this:

I lived in a boarding school in High school. When I was a freshman, the upper classmen would sometimes get bored and make us do embarrassing things as entertainment. I once had to dance with another guy, each biting a cookie and as it was crumbling down while everyone was looking at me. Four years later I was the dorm leader and a Christian. One winter night, friends of mine convinced me to do a similar prank with freshmen. There I was doing the very thing I had hated four years before. Do you ever do something like that?

You are not alone. Paul also felt this way. He was a great man but he still did things he didn’t want to do and didn’t do things he wanted to do. Let’s take a look at Romans 7 to see Paul and how he deals with it. Since you and I struggle in a similar way, we really should see what it says. Let’s look here.

This introduction to a talk, has a story that points to the FCF- we do things we don’t want to do. This helps the students become interested in what Paul has to say. Without this story and the FCF there is a good chance they will not be as interested in hearing from the passage.

- b. How do we discover the FCF?
 - i. What concern or concerns did the text address?
 - ii. Looking at the original context to discover the original burden/issue/concern that was addressed in that context.

- iii. What do we share in common with those for or about whom this was written, or the one by whom this was written?
- iv. This is what turns it from a lecture into a sermon. How are we like this writer, these people? Why did the Spirit record his experience for me?
- v. Value of the FCF in personal experience
- vi. Makes me engage with mind and heart/soul ... message becomes for me and what is going on in my life
- vii. Keeps the congregation/students in my mind ... I put their lives into this question and ask what they share, what concerns do they have, how could they relate
- viii. Awakes thirst early on in talk to hear more from Scripture (key to introduction)
- ix. The sharper and more poignant the FCF the more powerful the talk/sermon

c. Bible passages

- i. Isaiah 30: 15-17
- ii. Psalm 131
- iii. Luke 14: 7-11
- iv. Romans 12: 1-2

3. Summarizing Christ-Centered Preaching

The objective is to communicate the importance of having Christ-centered talk that flows from the FCF.

a. Who is the most inspirational person you have met or heard about?

We give talks not to inform, not to inspire, but to transform; for students to come from death to life as whole beings, or in areas of their minds, hearts and souls. We give talks so that young men and women can be transformed by the power of the Spirit as He uses His Word. And in the Christian story the power for this salvation and transformation is found in the person and work of Christ and the good news/gospel about Him. It is talks like this that are redemptive and hopeful. But before we look at what Christ-centered preaching can look like ... let us just spend a bit of time exploring Christ-less talks.

b. Explore Christ-less talks

(moralism/good ethics, legalism, good exemplism, behavior fixing) – sub-Christian messages Deadly B's: Be Like, Be Good, Be Disciplined ("I hate bees" illustration)

i. Be Like – "exemplism"

What, if any, is wrong with exhorting people to be like someone in the Bible? Moses, David, Peter and Paul – but problem is that these characters have significant failings. May be some aspect of their character we can emulate but must be careful to identify the source of this positive feature – flowing from the Spirit and God's Work in their life through Christ.

ii. Be Good – moralism/legalism

What can be wrong with exhorting people to do good? Problem lies in what the sermon may fail to present and also lead people to believe that simply being good is good

enough to please God. Doesn't address the motives, and the heart issues. As this preaching runs its course it destroys the biblical distinctive of grace and dangerous implication that God is pleased with you and will love you more if you have a good week.

iii. Be Disciplined - behaviorism

What is wrong with exhorting people to use the means of grace – prayer etc. – to improve their relationship with God? Pray more, read more Bible, go to church more, do more evangelism, give more, use your gifts more etc. etc. leads one down the path of, 'Had a bad day today because skipped my quiet time.'

Few preachers intentionally lead people astray in these ways, but if this is the thrust of your talks and messages then it can warp the faith of those who listen because these messages make our change about our own strength.

c. Christ centered talks

So, what does a Christ-centered message look like? What is the journey in our preparation that leads us away from the deadly b's and towards a life-giving Christ-centered talk?

I think a good way to start moving away from these messages is to have a clearly identified FCF because this creates a thirst, a longing, for some redemption that comes from outside ourselves. We are in the same boat as the original people, so where does our help come from? Who can rescue us? Who is powerful enough to transform us? These are questions that lead us away from ourselves and to Christ.

I find it valuable to focus on the grand redemptive purpose that leads to a Christ-focus. We don't need to deny validity of instructions, examples, disciplines - these have their place. Nor do we have to make Jesus 'appear' in every biblical account when there is no sound exegetical reason to justify this. But what we do need to do is discern the place and role of the text in the entire revelation of God's redemptive plan. Scripture is an organic whole that leads to Christ and from Christ and each part builds this story, has a role and place in this arc of redemption. So it is about identifying how this particular text legitimately serves in the great drama God is writing. Therefore the preacher needs to demonstrate the relation of the passage to the overall war between the Seed of woman and Satan, and then Christ will assume his rightful place in the passage.

Therefore the preacher needs to focus on what God is accomplishing in redemption and this will lead us away from moralistic talks. God is the hero of every text. And God-centered messages inevitably become Christ-centered because it demonstrates the reality of the human problem and the divine solution.

- d. Group example: Psalm 119
- e. Questions:
 - i. Doesn't it always sound the same?
 - ii. Aren't we forcing Christ into passages and so overlooking what is actually there
 - iii. Role of Holy Spirit?
- f. Opportunity to practice in small groups
- g. Review practice
 - i. Example

Samson – judge, in the cycle of God’s people turning from God then crying out for help, judge sent who delivers them but then repeat the cycle. This shows God’s faithfulness, our constant ‘wandering hearts’ and the inability of even the strongest judge to ultimately and finally rescue God’s people. (Chapell) Therefore points to the Perfect Judge who can be victorious. (Keller)

- ii. Discuss how the text could become ‘deadly’
- iii. Discuss how the text could become ‘Christ-centered’ objective - communicate the importance of having a Christ-centered talk that flows from the FCF

Session 3: Biblical Preaching

Taught by Tim Leary

Goals

- State why having a Big Idea helps the message.
- Identify a Biblical Big Idea.
- Help the listener have a heart change through Jesus with the Big Idea.

1. The Big Idea

When people speak of preaching Biblically what do they mean? It is not that they only read the Bible. Or that every word they speak is about the Bible. To preach Biblically, one has to identify what the author of the passage was saying to his audience who would read the passage, and then say that message to today’s audience. The words are not the key, the idea is the key.

In literature on public speaking there is a consensus that each talk should have one overriding theme or message- A Big Idea. This message should be the glue that all the other ideas fit around and under. For a sermon to be Biblical, the Big Idea of the message should come from the Big Idea of the Bible passage that was selected for preaching.

The most common mistake of a first-time speaker is to share too many unrelated ideas. The speaker has worked hard on the talk. They have invested considerable time to understand the text. They have not eliminated the less important things to make one idea seem central. It has been said, “A sermon should be a bullet and not a buckshot?” (or dump truck). The dump truck is the error of first time speakers. The buck shot- giving many different ideas prominence in a talk, is trying to do too much in a talk but not doing any one thing well. It doesn’t really go deep enough to do real service to any idea. In the book, *Made to Stick*, the authors say, if you try to say three things, you say nothing. Most sermons are based around three ideas but they would be more memorable and effective if they were based around one Big Idea.

2. Objective: Identify a Biblical Big Idea

Here are six steps to help you identify the Biblical Big Idea.

- ~ a. choose a passage unit for the message

Not too long, not too short

(1-3 paragraphs in the epistles, longer passages in narrative)

- b. identify the subject of the passage in a question (what’s it talking about?) a bullet not a buckshot, not words or phrases, but a question? (not 3 sermonettes)- research says sermons have too many unrelated ideas

- c. identify the complement of the passage (what is it saying – answer the question)
- d. put together to form the Biblical Big Idea
- e. consider the gap from the text to the audience- college students today
- f. form the preaching Big Idea- memorable & short

3. What Size Passage Should We Preach from?

How many of us have heard a message on the prodigal son? Is the message of that passage about the prodigal son or the older brother? After reading it closely, it is ultimately about the older brother. It is a word to the Pharisees listening. You can tell that by how it ends (with the older brother not joining the party). Then, is it legitimate to preach this parable and focus on the prodigal? It is legitimate if you limit the passage to just include that part of the parable. When the passage length is reduced then you can preach the main idea of this passage. This is definitely legitimate as it is a sub point that the parable is making.

4. Focusing on Ideas

We are concerned not with individual words, but with what the biblical authors meant through their use of words. Many preachers spend too much time talking about words and how they are used. If there is a modern translation saying what you are trying to say, quote that translation. Still, be careful that as you suggest a better translation than what the audience has in front of them, you are decreasing their faith in the Bible they

have. While it is helpful to study the words in our preparation for speaking, we should focus on ideas when we preach. We must grapple with the Bible at the level of ideas.³

5. Finding the Subject

The subject of the passage is not the same as a subject in a sentence. The subject of a passage is basically answering the question, “What is this passage about?” It is best to frame this in a question. So, considering the prodigal son- what is it about- “The unfailing love of the father.” Or stated in a question: “How will the father respond to a prodigal son?”

6. Finding the Complement

The complement is answering the question of the subject. If the subject is telling us what the passage is about, the complement tells us what the passage is saying about the subject. So in the case of the prodigal son, the complement would be, “the father lavishes his love on his prodigal son.” This is the part that the text actually says and needs to be clearly understood to preach the message of the passage.

7. What is the Big Idea?

The Big Idea is found in linking the subject and the complement. The subject asks the question and the complement answers it. The passage always has a Big Idea and it is composed of the subject and the complement. The equation of the passage is:

³ Haddon Robinson class lectures, May, 2010.

Big Idea = Subject + Complement. The Big Idea is combining the subject and the complement into a complete sentence that incorporates the whole passage. Using the example of the prodigal son, the Big Idea is: “Even after the son has deserted his father, when the son returns, the father lavishes his love on him.”

8. Consider the Audience

As college students today often are far from their home, they can feel far from God (the true father in the prodigal story). So the prodigal son parable applies easily to today for them. However, not all passages bridge easily to today. For instance, a passage about head coverings, requires some care. The principle that is in the passage can be preached, but the application of the principle needs to be for students today. Similarly, a passage about slavery or “the conquest” necessitates some thought before being preached to students today. Passages about obeying masters with slavery might apply towards the relationship between graduate students and advisers in graduate school. The application needs to help us live for Christ on campus today.

9. The Preaching Big Idea

The Biblical Big Idea⁴ needs to be restated to make it memorable and current. College students won’t remember a long sentence as a Big Idea. They need a slogan or a summary to get the gist of what you are trying to say. The “preaching idea” is a catchy slogan about God or about what we should do in response to God. It may seem like it is not worthy of God to make catchy phrases to summarize his teaching. If He wanted to teach that way, He would have. But the need for a short catchy phrase to summarize the

⁴ Biblical Big Idea is used instead of Exegetical Big Idea and Preaching Big Idea is used instead of Homiletical Big Idea.

Biblical Big Idea is more a statement of our times. In a Facebook and internet generation, advertising has taken over. People's memories are not what they used to be (Mark's Gospel was written 30 years after Jesus and he records events in great detail). The preaching Big Idea of a message about the prodigal son for college students might be: God loves you even if you flunked out of school because you were high on drugs. This is a bit long but it communicates the story of the prodigal son and brings it to today's culture. We don't live in a pig farming community but on campus today.

10. Answering the Audience's Question

College students today grow up in a more secular culture. Even if a Bible passage is communicated clearly and creatively, they may not understand or believe it. As you preach the Big Idea it is important to have an apologetic approach. The three big questions that can come to mind as a student listens are: Is this true? What does this mean? Why does this matter? The three developmental questions should be considered as you prepare your talk. As you come to your Big Idea try to see which of these three questions will likely be in the audience's mind. As you consider what question they will ask, you will help them receive the Big Idea as from God and it has a chance to help their lives.

11. Objective- Preach for the Heart, not just for Behavior⁵

The secular humanists think people are born good, and over time the world and its evilness corrupts them. The Bible declares that the world was made good and then

⁵ From Charles Zimmerman, course lectures Biblical Theological Seminary, 2003.

became corrupted by sin and each person born, has been born into sin. Sinful people make the world evil. The sin in their hearts shows up in actions which affect the world.

When we preach we often want to help people change behavior. The law of God is Biblical but the method must include grace and Christ. Pharisees told people to change behavior but they never helped them do it. Evangelical preaching can do the same. If we tell students to stop stealing food from the cafeteria, they may stop for a little while but true change is impossible unless we go to the heart of the issue. In a large group talk, we should investigate why students stealing food from the cafeteria is harmful and who it harms and why we do it. Consider the sin deeply. Share how it tempts us (we think it is our right, or the school is too expensive anyhow, or really I don't trust God to provide for my needs). Then bring this deeper problem to Jesus. He is the one that can touch our heart, give us strength through the Holy Spirit to fight temptation. If we don't bring our audience to God, we are more similar to the accuser than to Jesus who forgives. If we talk about sinning in a deep way and consider why we are tempted, we can then ask Jesus to save us and transform us. As we trust Jesus the provider (fed 5000 at once from hardly anything), we can stop stealing. Jesus has the power and he will change our hearts which will change our behavior and, as more and more people are changed our world will be renewed.

Session 4: Organizing a Talk

Taught by Bruce Cooke

Goals

- Provide practical suggestions for organizing a talk.

- Creating an outline.

1. Introduction: now what do I do?

What do we do once we actually have a passage to preach on? What are the next steps? How do I actually get to an outline? Where do I go? In groups share what are the first 2-3 steps you take. Share as a large group.

2. The Essentials

I am just going to go over what I find to be the key essentials that we should keep in mind as we progress towards getting our outline together. Not set on the exact order, but these should be somewhere in the process.

- a. Read passage (multiple versions)
- b. Establish the FCF
- c. One Big Idea
- d. Commentaries (Start with a Study Bible)
- e. Journey – where are we going? Do I know? This is something I try and always keep before me ... I need to have a good idea of where I am starting and where I want to end up. What is the journey I want to take people on.
- f. Outline – how I am getting ‘there’. The more detailed the better, will help with writing the manuscript
- g. Manuscript – writing out in full in your ‘speaking voice’ (not writing voice).

- h. Practice at least 2-3 times out loud while timing yourself.
- i. Outline on one page.
- j. Practice with outline
- k. KISS KISS KISS KISS: Keep It Simple Stupid ... one of the big problems we run into is overcomplicating our talks and trying to get too much content squeezed in. So, in order to help me avoid this I am constantly reminding myself to KISS it ... Keep It Simple. Remember what the main idea is and make sure this is very clear and uncomplicated; which means cutting out many things that are not necessary.

3. Discussion

Please discuss the benefits and challenges of preaching from a manuscript or an outline.

4. The Forgottens

- a. Introduction – taking off is crucial to get people's attention and communicate why it is important to them to listen to what God's Word has to say
- b. Transitions – turning from one point to another, from explanation to application. These transitions are often overlooked but are important to keep things flowing smoothly and tied together in one unified whole.
- c. Conclusion – landing the plane is often the hardest to do, but there are few things worse than listening to someone circle and circle and unable to bring the plane down smoothly and promptly. Therefore we need to practice and

prepare how to conclude a talk in an efficient and clear way. This is not the time to communicate anything new, but rather to remind the congregation where we have come and to hold on to that one main idea.

d. Expositional Rain – fasten seat belts (same message, same way). In other words, it is important to use the same key words, images, ideas throughout the talk. They should ‘rain’ down from introduction to conclusion. This is unlike a paper where we try and say the same things using different words, in a talk we want to keep it simple and clear. Same message, same way, from start to finish.

5. Application

Take your talk outline and spend some time working on it in preparation for this afternoon.

Session 5: Speaking to Students’ Heart & Mind

Taught by Tim Leary

Goals

- Understand the challenges of oral communication.
- Identify two best communicators in the past 10 years.
- Know why delivery matters when preaching.
- Understand the curse of knowledge.

1. The Challenges of Oral Communication

Many people assume oral communication is simple. You write your thoughts down and then read them out and the listeners understand it clearly. However, studies show that audiences remember very little from oral presentations. Also, the fear of public speaking is greater than the fear of death to many people.⁶ The amount of time a college graduate has spent studying how to communicate in writing is huge in comparison to how much they have studied oral communication.

Oral communication is different from written communication. It requires simplicity while written communication can build around complexity. A reader can easily re-read a sentence or paragraph while a listener has one chance to hear the idea (unless it is repeated).

Giving a talk where people understand you, trust and follow what you are saying is not easy.

2. The Best Oral Communicators on TV

Who are the best communicators on TV in the past 10 or so years? Bill Clinton and Oprah. Why? They connect with people. Bill Clinton was not always so smooth. While he was supposed to do a 15 minute introduction of the Governor of Massachusetts and presidential nominee Michael Dukakis:

Clinton couldn't help himself. He gave a meandering, disorganized, yawn-inducing speech that had party leaders in a panic. After thirty minutes, convention aides started turning the house lights on and off. They even flashed the message

⁶ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 172.

“Time’s up!” on the teleprompter. Finally, party leader Jim Wright ordered the mechanical podium on which Clinton stood be lowered. When Bill Clinton felt the platform moving beneath his feet, he finally brought his long winded “introduction” to a close. After that widely criticized disaster, Mr. Clinton learned to deliver better organized, more concise speeches.⁷

Also, Clinton used to point his finger which connoted that he was looking down on the audience. Over time he learned to point with his thumb and finger which is a more winsome approach. But Bill Clinton likes to connect with people and tell his story and his ideas. Clinton also cares about his appearance (well-groomed and dressed). When speaking he isn’t frozen behind a podium like most presidents before him were. He walks around and has movement. He has confident behavior (smile, eye contact), humor in his stories (not jokes), he tells stories, and he calls people to involvement (motivate, persuade).

Oprah also makes the audience in the studio and those at home feel like she is their friend. She connects with them and shares life. This makes her likable. Being “likable” is important as a communicator. Since the invention of television, being perceived as likable has won every presidential election.⁸ Whether it was Reagan v. Mondale or Nixon v. JFK- the one who seemed more likable became president. Nixon v. JFK debate is interesting as most people, if they listened to the radio, thought that Nixon won a key debate but the majority who saw it on TV saw JFK as much more presidential. More people saw the TV version and JFK became the 35th president.

⁷ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 61.

⁸ Bert Decker, *You've Got to be Believed to be Heard*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 87.

3. Delivery Matters when Preaching

When preaching to college students, reading the sermon is horrible. How often do students hear people stand and read speeches? Never. Teachers don't do it. Politicians use teleprompters. So they do, but better than we can. Reading a sermon puts your head down and kills eye contact. It keeps you from movement and expression. Don't do it. Organize your thoughts into an outline and practice it and let it go from the heart (people don't want facts and figures, they want someone to listen to, someone to like.)

When standing put your hands down along your side. It is awkward at first but before you know it you will move your arms and hands naturally with expression. If you have them in your pocket or on the podium or holding your hands together, you will not be able to express naturally.

During talks and speeches people often struggle with saying "um." The trouble with saying "um" is that you end up doing it a lot and it takes away from the talk, interrupts and distracts. The solution is to learn to "pause". Effective pausing adds to suspense and delivery more than any other vocal efforts (pitch, and volume). With a well timed extended pause you create suspense and effect and people will lean in to listen.

4. The Curse of Knowledge

A challenge in public speaking and in preaching is by the time you stand to speak, you likely have spent so much time learning about what you are talking about that you have new vocabulary and concepts that are not shared with your audience. This creates a barrier to hearing your message. This "curse of knowledge" is hard to get over. The speaker needs to remember the process they took to learn what they did.

In preaching, quoting the Bible along the way and showing the verse that you are getting information from helps. Referring to the Bible breaks this knowledge barrier and equips the audience to learn from the Bible.

Also, telling stories is the easiest way to demonstrate what you are talking about. It is also something we all know how to do and it is interesting to the audience. Telling stories in a talk is the easiest way to break the curse of knowledge and invites the audience into the story. In preaching it also helps people see the Christian faith lived out today.

Session 6: Practice Preaching

Taught by Tim Leary

Goals

- To give each participant a chance to share a mini message (10 minutes).
- Give feedback.

1. Pre-assignments

As a pre-assignment to the workshop we asked people to come with a one page outline of a talk. This way as we were teaching, they knew they had a chance to apply what we were talking about right away. We suggested them to do a talk they would do this fall in our large group gatherings. So this work will help them in the fall as they prepare to preach.

2. Feedback

We all filled out a feedback form for each student's talk (included in appendix). It asked us to name the Big Idea and give both positives and suggested areas of improvement on the written. Because the group was pretty nervous, we kept the verbal feedback to just positives. We also recorded each talk and sent it to them so they could see the areas of strength and improvement for themselves.

Conclusion

This was the first time Bruce and I taught preaching. It was great to have 14 staff join us for it. It was also great working together as we each had something to offer. Bruce was the Covenant (Christ Centered Preaching) guy while I was the Gordon Conwell, (Biblical Preaching) guy. We got to teach from what we studied. The last chapter of this thesis will review the teaching and the future adjustments to be made.

CHAPTER 5

OUTCOMES: AN EXAMINATION OF THE PREACHING WORKSHOP'S EFFECTIVENESS

The purpose of this thesis project is to teach new college ministers how to preach the Bible to college students. As part of the project, I developed a two day preaching workshop course with a colleague. We gathered on May 31st and June 1st, 2011 for our preaching workshop. My colleague, Bruce Cooke (who went to Covenant Seminary) was my co-teacher. Fourteen InterVarsity staff, most relatively new, participated.

The material in this course was drawn from research and class material in the Doctor of Ministry preaching track entitled “The Preacher and the Message.” Our primary goal was to impart skills to young staff to aid them in developing effective messages from the Bible to preach to students. Most never went to seminary or had formal training of any kind in public speaking. My colleague and I shared the best teaching and skills we learned from our seminary training. And, since collectively we have been ministering to college students for 22 years, we also shared from our personal experiences of preaching on campus.

We used three methods to evaluate the effectiveness of this course: 1) the discussion during the course, 2) the feedback forms filled out by students 3) the preaching at the end of the course.

Discussions during the Course

During our teaching time we sought to impress upon the college ministers the importance of preaching. We encouraged them to trust that God can speak through them

as they teach the Bible. Throughout the two days, we paid attention to the staff's behavior to get an idea of whether or not the course seemed to be beneficial to them. As we lectured and did exercises with them, we observed them taking notes even though there were no tests or grades for the workshop. We also used a video of Tim Keller explaining that the Bible is not about "you" but about Jesus. They discussed the relevance for their talks. They were "leaning in" to learn and participated in the discussion in an active and engaged way. We were encouraged that they read the pre-course material which was intended to introduce them to great preachers and their lessons on preaching. The participants were eager to learn and showed that they valued the preaching workshop as worthy of spending the needed time to learn well. Based on the participants' conversations during our time together, it seemed that the workshop helped them to develop in the conviction that God could speak through them to students.

The Written Feedback

The written feedback we received is divided into two kinds: quantitative evaluations (on a scale of 0-5) and short answer qualitative responses. The feedback form we used to gather this data can be found in the appendix. We told the staff we might do this training again and that their feedback would be helpful to know what parts to keep and what parts to change. The feedback was anonymous to enable them to speak honestly. Some of the positive responses they gave were:

I thought this was awesome. Loved all the interactive exercises.

A great gift for the younger staff, especially in regards to the importance of Christ-centered preaching to the heart, not just behavior.

Helpful, clear, practical, strategies & hands on work was great.

I feel I have a much better understanding of how to walk through the process of choosing and prepping passages.

I think this was extremely helpful for my staff work.

Honestly, it was about perfect. Thank you so much!!!

Filled in the gap of how I've self-taught myself to preach- so helpful!!

These responses indicate that the training was worthwhile to the participants. If it helped these staff improve in their ministry as they said, then the workshop accomplished its major objective. One staff wrote that the workshop "filled in the gap of how I've self-taught myself to preach- so helpful!!" This staff had tried to self-teach themselves how to preach to students. The need is great; these staff want to do a good job "speaking for Jesus." This training, while not perfect, was an answer to a need in their staff growth. It seems from this feedback that the course was helpful.

Still, there are areas for future improvement and the reviews included a section to indicate what could be improved or changed. We encouraged each participant to share improvements to be made, as we hope to further develop the workshop to use again. Some of the most helpful reviews said:

More structured bullet points for how to contrast a talk from topic to passage.

Help with structuring talk, other than intro & conclusion, how do we structure the rest

More direction on the 10-minute talk- either making us write/improve it- giving more direction

More specifics on how the Big Idea & FCF relate and are incorporated into a talk

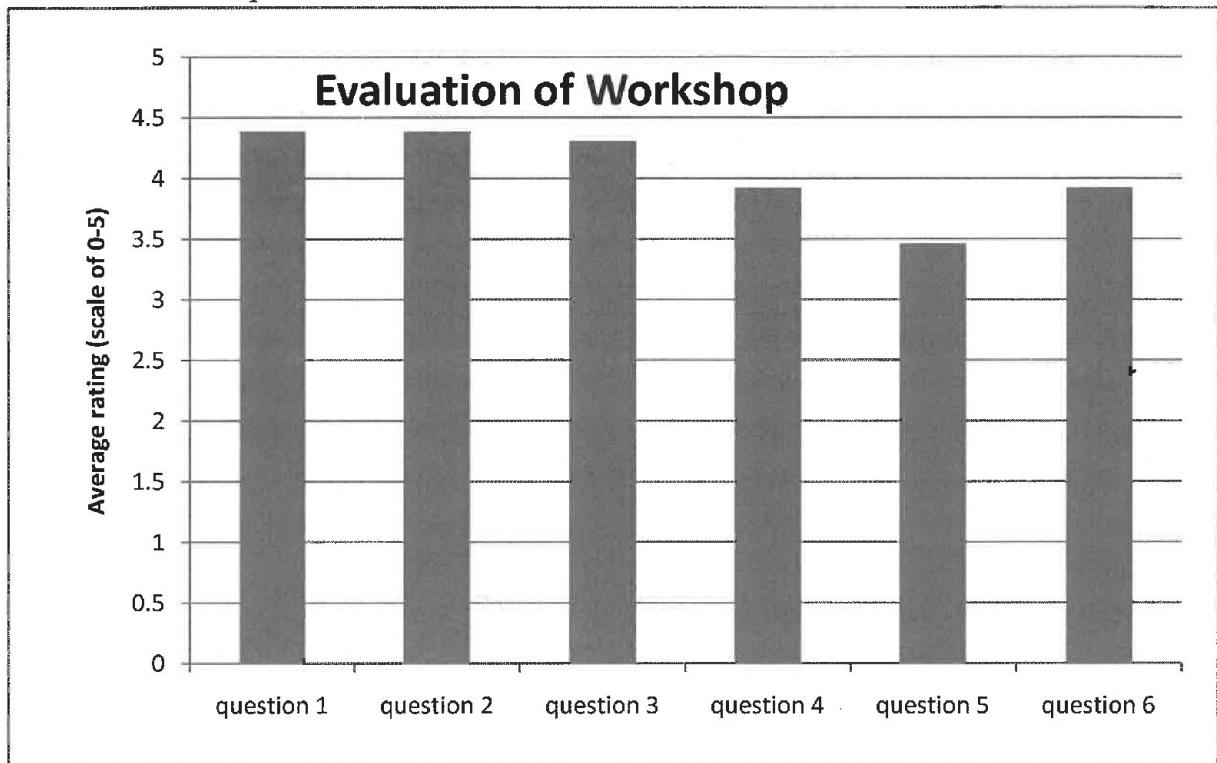
The third quote about giving more direction with the 10-minute talk is a good suggestion to implement. We could give them an hour or two after our teaching to work on revising their talks before they have to preach it in our workshop. This would enable them to reflect and immediately apply the new things they learned. Still, it seemed beneficial to have them share a 10 minute talk as it created an urgency to learn what we were trying to teach. Dr. Lamb recommended this in her interview as a way to motivate participants to learn. The social pressure to stand and speak creates a nervousness that encourages learning. There were two comments about needing more help with developing and structuring a talk. This needs to be more of a focus in future preaching workshops.

The quantitative feedback was also helpful. The questions were the following:

How did this workshop help me...

- 1: Develop Christ- centered messages
- 2: Identify the “Fallen Condition” in a passage
- 3: Learn to give a Christ-centered talk.
- 4: Find and Communicate “the Big idea” of a passage
- 5: Analyze my audience and connect with them on a heart level
- 6: Become more confident that I can point people to Christ through God’s Word

The scores for the questions can be seen here



The three highest scores are related to the Christ-Centered preaching and the “fallen conditioned focus.” These were a major focus, so it makes sense that the highest scores were about these topics. Hopefully, this teaching will help them to speak clearly in large group talks. Focusing on the Big Idea of the passage and on Christ will improve the talks considerably.

The lowest score was in analyzing the audience. This is definitely an area we want to improve on in the future. We wanted this to be a workshop that summarized what we learned in seminary with special attention to applying it to the university setting. I think we succeeded in the first and need to improve on the second. We tried to integrate the university as our target audience into our teaching on each topic. However, to clarify our focus it seems it would be better to set aside some time to discuss how preaching in

the university today is different from both preaching in a church and preaching to the university in the past.

One person suggested having a woman co-teacher. I think this would help the women staff see a role model they can look up to and be like. Also, as most Christian audiences are made up of more than 50% women, this will also help us know how to teach in a manner that communicates well to women.

Review of the 10 Minute Talks

Because we had the staff give mini-talks at the end of our training, we were able to observe if they applied our teaching in their talks. On the whole, they could use improvement. Most still seemed to ramble and did not try to get the Big Idea and from the Bible and impress it to our minds and our hearts. As stated earlier, after our teaching there was not enough time to improve the talk outlines. It is possible that they gave the talk that they brought to the seminar as they only had 40 minutes to make changes. Still, because they were not strong talks, this demonstrates how difficult it is to improve their preaching. Although they were introduced to the subject, took notes and engaged in our exercises, it was a struggle for them to preach a “Big Idea” from the Bible. Because they claimed to be helped by our workshop and yet their performance in preaching was not strong, we need to change our format to allow time for them implement changes to their talks. Hopefully, with more time to improve their talks, they can apply what they learned and carry it with them in the future. We also videotaped them so they could see and hear themselves and verbalize how they might improve their talks. We sent the videos with them at the end of the workshop.

Improvements to be made for Future Preaching Workshops

One big change for future workshops is to use consistent language that helps the participants understand. This comes from a suggestion in the feedback that said, “More specifics on how the Big Idea & FCF relate and are incorporated into a talk.” Bruce presented the “Fallen Condition Focus” as one important way to both analyze the text and consider how it can impact us. Then, I presented how to arrive at the “Big Idea” through finding the subject and then the complement. But we presented these as two separate ways to approach the text. Having two different ways to handle the text is confusing for the participants. There are areas of great overlap between these two approaches, and this workshop would be improved if we integrated features to speak about them together.

Also, while it is helpful to require students to take notes and be engaged in learning, I think we should have formulated a “take away sheet.” This would help them apply the teaching during the school year when they have a few days to write a talk. Indeed, they need help remembering how to do it. They are perhaps less likely to read their notes, but might scan a print-out made for them. This is something that Campus Crusade for Christ made for their staff when teaching them preaching and Bible study methods.¹ This would be similar to “Haddon Robinson’s Ten Stages to Biblical Preaching.” It would be modified for the university and incorporate Fallen Condition Focus as well. A one page summary is helpful to look over when preparing a talk.

¹ Campus Crusade training provided from their summer staff training on Leading Bible Study and Preaching Class.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this preaching workshop was successful in that it summarized the key points of Biblical communication in just two days and gave the college ministry staff a chance to practice what they learned. Still, to improve it more, we need to develop ways to shape and apply a passage to the college setting. We also need to allow for more time to edit and develop the ideas taught into preaching practice or “10 minute talks” and provide a “take away sheet.” We hope more staff will be equipped to share God’s good news with students in future preaching workshops. It was an honor to teach IV Staff to preach Christ on Campus.

APPENDIX 1

10 STEPS TO PREACHING CHRIST ON CAMPUS

(Adapted from Haddon Robinson's 10 stages to Biblical Preaching)

- 1) **Pray** for God to give you his Spirit and His Wisdom to share with students.
- 2) **Choose a general topic** to speak to the students (choose one that matters, important issues and themes).
- 3) **Select a passage.** Base the talk on a unit of Biblical thought. (the passage is the guide for talk, not the topic) (Passage should be a complete thought, one paragraph at least, one large story at most)
- 4) **Study the passage deeply** by yourself first, using a Study Bible next, and then commentaries. Gather your notes.

Look for main idea, development, illustrations and possible introductions and applications.
- 5) **Find the Fallen Condition Focus (FCF- the Need)-** Why is the scripture needed? (Is there something people don't know about God or they needed guidance about?) Consider how this FCF relates to students today.
- 6) **Discover the Biblical Big Idea** What is this passage saying (about the need)?

The FCF is the general need that the scripture is to speak to. The Answer is what the passage is saying to that need

FCF + The Answer = Big Idea

How does the author of this passage want the listeners to respond? Outline the development of the passage.
- 7) **Analyze the Big Idea** with 3 questions? “What does it mean?” (explain it)

“Is it true?” Do I believe it? (explore validity)

“So What?” What difference does it make (explore applications)
- 8) **Adapt Big Idea to “Preaching Big Idea.”** Restate the Biblical Big Idea in the most precise & memorable way possible so students can hear and remember.
- 9) **Outline the Sermon with stories** (start with the need FCF for students, then help them hear from scripture).

Include transitions (maybe questions) and fill in outline with supporting materials that explain, prove, apply or amplify the Big Idea of the sermon. (Remember, stories help the student “see” what you are saying).

10) Prepare the introduction and conclusion.

Does the introduction: A) command attention? B) introduce the Big Idea?
C) surface needs (FCF)? D) is it short?

Is the Conclusion a: A) summary? B) Illustrion? C) quotation?
D) question? E) prayer

Prepare the talk, practice the talk, and evaluate the talk, improve the talk.

Haddon Robinson's Ten Stages to Biblical Preaching

Haddon Robinson's Ten Stages to Biblical Preaching

1. **Select the Passage.** Base the sermon on a unit of biblical thought.
2. **Study the passage and gather your notes.** Use sheets of paper to keep notes on the idea, its development, illustrations and possible introductions, and applications.
3. **Discover Exegetical Idea.** As you study the passage, relate the parts to each other to determine the exegetical idea and its development.
 - a) State the idea of the passage in a single sentence that combines your subject and complement.
*"What is the author talking about?" Subject
"What is the author saying about what he is talking about?" Complement
Subject + Complement = Main Idea*
 - b) Outline the development of that idea from the passage.
4. **Analyze The Exegetical Idea.** Submit the exegetical idea to three developmental questions.
 - a) *What does it mean?* Explores explanation.
 - b) *Is it true? Do I believe it?* Explores validity.
 - c) *So what? What difference does it make?* Explores implications and application.
5. **Formulate the Homiletical Idea.** In light of the audience's knowledge and experience think through the exegetical idea and state it in the most exact memorable sentence possible.

How can the main/exegetical idea be made real for this audience?
6. **Determine the Sermon's Purpose.** The purpose states what one expects to happen in the hearer as a result of preaching this sermon.
 - a) *Why did the author write this?*
 - b) *What effect did he expect it to have on his readers?*
 - c) *What is expected to happen to the hearer as a result of hearing this?*
7. **Decide How to Accomplish This Purpose.** Thinking about the homiletical idea, ask yourself how this idea should be handled to accomplish your purpose:
 - a) *Is there an idea to be explained?* = deductive
 - b) *Is there a proposition to be proved?* = deductive
 - c) *Is there a principle to be applied?* = deductive
 - d) *Is there a subject to be completed?* = key word approach = combination
 - e) *Is there a story to be told?* = inductive story
 - f) *Is there a problem to be solved?* = inductive
 - g) *Should the sermon develop inductively, deductively, or through a combination both?*
8. **Outline the Sermon.** Having decided how the idea must be developed to accomplish your purpose, outline the sermon. Include transitions. Outlines must have complete thoughts and statements in the moves. Questions are reserved for transitions.
9. **Fill in the Sermon Outline.** Fill in the outline with supporting materials that explain, prove, apply or amplify the moves of the sermon. Explain relationships and make transitions. In inductive sermons, transitions are critical.

Do the moves/sub-ideas need:

a) a Restatement?	b) an Explanation and Definition?
c) some Factual Information?	d) a Quotation?
e) a Narration?	f) an Illustration?
10. **Prepare the Introduction and Conclusion.** A good introduction exposes the congregation to the idea and its development or the first move/sub-idea of the sermon. A good conclusion gives the congregation a view of the idea, entire and complete, and drives home its truth to the mind and life.

Does the Introduction:

a) command attention?	b) introduce the body of a sermon?
c) surface needs?	d) is it short?

Is the Conclusion:

a) a Summary?	b) Illustration?
c) Quotation?	d) Question?
e) Prayer?	

Prepare the written manuscript (think in images), practice the sermon, deliver it, and evaluate!

APPENDIX 2
HANDOUT OF PREACHING EVALUATION

(How to prepare large group talks) – Talk Feedback

Did the intro capture your attention? Y or N

Was there an FCF? What was it? _____

What was the Big idea of the talk? _____

Was the talk Christ-Centered or people centered? _____

What are you asked to do or think in light of this talk? _____

Any suggestions for improvement _____

APPENDIX 3

PREACHING WORKSHOP EVALUATION

(How to prepare large group talks)

By Tim Leary and Bruce Cooke

This workshop helped me learn a process I can use to develop Christ-centered messages.

0 1 2 3 4 5 (0 = not at all; 5 = definitely)

This workshop helped me learn how to identify the “fallen condition” and “redemptive solution” in a passage.

0 1 2 3 4 5 (0 = not at all; 5 = definitely)

This workshop helped me learn how to find and communicate “the Big idea” of a passage.

0 1 2 3 4 5 (0 = not at all; 5 = definitely)

This workshop helped me learn how to analyze my audience and connect with them on a heart level.

0 1 2 3 4 5 (0 = not at all; 5 = definitely)

As a result of this workshop, I feel more confident that I can point people to Christ through God’s Word.

0 1 2 3 4 5 (0 = not at all; 5 = definitely)

If you could change one thing about this workshop (reading assignments, lectures, small group times), what would it be?

In what specific ways have you benefited from the workshop?

Any other comments or suggestions?

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VITA

Name: Timothy John Leary

Place of Birth: Weymouth, Massachusetts

Date of Birth: June 2, 1975

Married with one son, Ezekiel, and one on the way.

Education

B.A. Psychology, Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, MD)

M.A. Psychology, Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, MD)

M.Div. Biblical Theological Seminary (Hatfield, PA)

D.Min. (Preaching), Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (South Hamilton, MA)

Period of study: May 2008-May 2010

Expected Graduation: May, 2012

Employed by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, 1999- present.